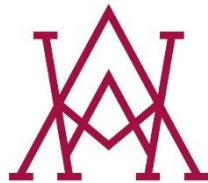


COGNITA



AKELEY WOOD
SCHOOL

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedure: COVID-19 addendum

January 2021

This COVID-19 addendum policy only applies during closure of the school site as directed by central government on the 4th January 2021 (England). It sets out changes to our main Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedure 20/21 and must be read in conjunction with that policy, and the Department for Education's guidance.

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1. Important contacts during partial /full closure of the school site due to an outbreak of the virus

SCHOOL CONTACTS	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Rebecca Chapman	Rebecca.chapman@akeleywoodschool.co.uk 01280828111
Deputy DSL (DDSL)	Lotty Dee-Andrew Tom Grey Harriet Featherstone	Lotty.dee-andrew@akeleywooschool.co.uk Tom.grey@akeleywoodschool.co.uk Harriet.featherstone@akeleywoodschool.co.uk 01280 814111
Principal	Simon Antwis	Simon.antwis@akeleywoodschool.co.uk
Director of Education	Nicola Lambros	nicola.lambros@cognita.com
Group Director of Education	Simon Camby	simon.camby@cognita.com
Regional Safeguarding Lead (RSL) - Europe	Alison Barnett	alison.barnett@cognita.com 07717806988 (or call via Microsoft Teams)
EXTERNAL KEY LOCAL CONTACTS		EMAIL/TEL NUMBER/WEBSITE
Children's Social Care (MASH or similar)		Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board secure-esasduty@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
Designated Officer		01296 382070 secure-lado@bucksc.gov.uk
Local authority Prevent Lead	Alison Watts	07793 658693

NATIONAL CONTACTS	
DfE Coronavirus helpline If you have a query about coronavirus (COVID-19), relating to schools and other educational establishments in England contact this helpline.	Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk Tel: 0800 046 8687 Lines are open Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm and weekends 10am to 4pm.
NSPCC 24/7 Helpline	Tel: 0808 800 5000 Email: help@nspcc.org.uk Text: 88858
NSPCC Child Line	Tel: 0800 1111
NSPCC FGM helpline	Tel: 0800 028 3550 Email: fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk
DfE Prevent helpline for schools and parents	Tel: 020 7340 7264 (non-emergency) Email: counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk
National Bullying Helpline	Tel: 0845 22 55 787
UK Safer Internet Centre helpline for School Staff	Tel: 0844 381 4772 Email: helpline@saferinternet.org.uk
Internet Watch Foundation hotline (for reporting criminal content)	www.iwf.org.uk
National Centre for Domestic Violence National Domestic Abuse Helpline Refuge	0800 970 2070 0808 2000 247 http://www.refuge.org.uk/

2. Scope and definitions

The government has directed that school sites can only remain open to offer Emergency Provision to those children who are defined as ‘vulnerable’, and to those children whose parents are key workers and considered critical to the ongoing COVID-19 response.

The Department for Education’s (DfE’s) latest definition of ‘vulnerable children’ can be found [here](#) and like before, includes those children who:

➤ Have a social worker, and are subject to a:

- child protection plan
- child in need plan
- looked after child plan

or

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

However, the list has been widened to allow for other children who may have vulnerabilities, and whom may benefit through being offered Emergency Provision. *Where operationally possible*, these children may be offered a place.

Schools should offer children who fall into any of the above groups a place in Emergency Provision (and continue to do so whilst EP is available as parental need may fluctuate). The above children do **not** have to take a place if offered. The fewer children in educational settings at this time will protect the NHS and save lives by reducing the risks of spreading the virus. Please note that, should parents of children subject to a Child in Need or Child Protection plan not accept their offered place, the Designated Safeguarding Lead must notify the child's allocated Social Worker.

3. Core safeguarding principles

The safety and wellbeing of all our pupils is still our number one priority whilst the school site is partially or fully closed due to a significant outbreak of the virus

Although we will be operating in a different way to normal due to the partial or full closure of the school site should there be a significant outbreak of the virus, we will still follow 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 DSL (DDSL) must be available and contactable during school hours (see section 5 for details of our arrangements)
- It is essential that unsuitable people do not enter our school workforce or gain access to children
- Children should continue to be protected when they are learning online
- We will still have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance: [Keeping Children safe in Education \(2020\)](#).

4. DSL (and DDSL) arrangements during partial or full closure of the school site due a significant outbreak of the virus

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

During any time of partial or full closure of the school site in the above scenario, the DSLs (and DDSL), wherever their location (remote or onsite), will continue to be responsible for safeguarding, alongside the Principal who holds ultimate responsibility. The DSL (and DDSL) will continue to identify who the most vulnerable children in our school are with regards to safeguarding and arrange additional support as needed (and where operationally possible). They will continue to update active Safeguarding Files and liaise with parents and partner agencies where concerns arise.

Should **both** the DSL and DDSL be unable to work due to sickness, or **both** be unable to take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding due *to any other personal reasons*, they must alert the Principal. The Principal should inform and seek additional support from Alison Barnett (RSL) and the Director of Education Nicola Lambros if both the DSL and DDSL be absent from work at the same time. The Principal will be supported to identify another member of the Senior Leadership Team to take responsibility for safeguarding on *an interim basis* until either the DSL or DDSL is able to resume responsibility. Should the Principal be unable to make decisions due to their own sickness/unavailability, a member of the SLT should inform the RSL and/or Director of Education.

With the support of the RSL as needed, the SLT nominee for Safeguarding will have temporary responsibility to continue to

- Identify the most vulnerable children in school and arrange support as needed for the child
- Update Safeguarding Files, where and when necessary
- Liaise with partner agencies, including making referrals where needed
- Notify the local authority of any children who are 'missing in education'
- Notify the Police of any criminal offences that we believe have taken place e.g. online distribution of inappropriate images
- Signpost parents to external organisations that may be able to offer them support and advice at this time

5. Reporting concerns about children

All staff must continue, during partial or full closure of the school site due to a significant outbreak of the virus, to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately, and report and record these concerns as per the existing Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures 20/21; there must be **no** delay in reporting and recording concerns just because the school site is partially/fully closed. It is still vitally important for staff to do this in order to safeguard any vulnerable children and/or parents who may be at risk, and it remains everyone's responsibility to be vigilant. Some children may be at increased risk in this scenario due to stressors in their home. Others may be higher risk due to increased time spent online at home. See section 10 for online safety issues.

6. Reporting concerns about staff members

With regards to any concerns about a staff member's conduct during partial or full closure of the school site due to a significant outbreak of the virus, we will continue to follow the principles set out in our existing Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures 20/21 and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020).

- Should parents or children raise concerns about a staff member's conduct during partial or full closure of the school site, then this will be managed as per procedure set out in our main Safeguarding and Child Protection policy 20/21.
- Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have about any colleague by talking to the Principal and/or DSL in the first instance. They should subsequently complete a Low-Level Concern form (this document must be password protected and sent to the Principal; concerns about the Principal should be raised verbally and immediately with the RSL/Director of Education).
- We will continue to refer adults who have deliberately harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child to the Designated Officer.
- We will continue to refer adults who have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child 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, in line with government guidance.

7. Inter-agency working

During partial or full closure of the school site due to a significant outbreak of the virus, we will continue to work with Children's Social Care, Police, and all other external agencies involved with the care of our children, for example CAMHS/other professionals involved in supporting children's mental health. DSLs/DDSLs will continue to make referrals to partner agencies and contribute to meetings such as Core Groups and CIN/LAC Reviews (in some cases remotely or by sending documentation).

Internal school Safeguarding Meetings will still take place at a minimum of 6 weeks during any partial or full school site closure due to a significant outbreak of the virus and will be held remotely as needed during full closure.

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

- Our 3 local safeguarding partners
- The Local Authority regarding 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

8. Monitoring attendance

8.1 Contact details

During closure of the school site, we will make sure we have up-to-date emergency contacts for **all** children. These will include contacts for their parents/carers, but we may also obtain additional emergency contact details *wherever possible* just in case the parents are unexpectedly unavailable due to illness/other due to COVID-19.

In addition to the above, where children have left the UK with their parents/carers to live in another country due to COVID-19 and/or the temporary closure of the school site, or *where they have moved to a different part of the UK*, we will request the new address at which the child is residing so that we have this for our records.

Where children have left the UK with their parents to live in another country due to COVID-19, and are *not* intending to return to the UK or school site when re-opened, and where they have formally expressed a desire to terminate their contract, we will request the new address at which the child is residing *plus* the name and address of their onward school so that we have this for our records. This information is also required by the Local Authority. Should this information not be provided, then consideration may be given to reporting the child as 'missing from education' to the Local Authority as per statutory guidance.

Where children remain in the UK, but are *not* accessing online learning during school site closure, and/or where they have formally expressed a desire to terminate their contract, we will request the name and address of their onward school so that we have this for our records. This information is also required by the Local Authority. Should this information not be provided, and where the parent/carers have not provided a reason as to why their child is not attending school for ten days (see below), then consideration may be given to reporting the child as 'missing from education' to the Local Authority as per statutory guidance.

8.2 Registering attendance

Most children will not be attending school *on the school site* at this time unless they are accessing Emergency Provision i.e. children whose parents are key workers, and/or they are assessed as 'vulnerable' as per the government's [definition](#) (see section 1).

From 5 January 2021, please note that the government has advised that educational settings do not need to complete the Educational setting status form. The government is in the process of updating the form to reflect the changes as per the Prime Minister's announcement on 4 January 2021. They will provide further instruction shortly on when educational settings should resume completing this form.

A record of those children attending Emergency Provision will be held locally, including the rationale for why they are in attendance. In addition, numbers in each category of need (Keyworker, Vulnerable or EHCP) will be centrally recorded on a daily basis to ensure that the most vulnerable children are supported at this time of school site closure.

For **all** children on roll, our taught curriculum is continuing, and online learning is our method for delivery at this time (barring Early Years who remain open at this time). It is critical that we maintain attendance

registers so that we can be sure that children are engaging with our online learning curriculum, but also in order to ensure they are safeguarded. Teachers will register children's online attendance via Cognita Connect this will record attendance data in the schools SIMS system and will be tracked and monitored by the school attendance monitor, tutors and pastoral team.

8.3 Non-Attendance during closure of the school site

During this period of closure of the school site, it is expected that **all** children on the school roll should attend school **every day** and engage with their online sessions and set learning activities (whether they have remained in the UK, OR we have been informed that the family left the UK to reside in another country)

If any child does **not** attend their online school learning, we will:

- Follow up on their absence in the normal manner with their parents or carers (or other emergency contact) by contacting them, on the same day where operationally possible by SMS or telephone where we have no specified reason for absence..
- Notify their allocated Social Worker, where they have one

We will continue to do this every day that the child does not attend, and where their parent/carer **does not** inform us that the child is unwell/other reason for not attending where operationally possible. Usual mechanisms for reporting absence will continue, email AWHRception@akeleywoodschool.co.uk or THMReception@akeleywoodschool.co.uk

*Schools will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on children's attendance. It is likely that some children may not be able to access online learning if their parent (s) become unwell or are required to care for others (or scenarios where one parent is working and the other is unwell). In these situations, attempts will be made to sensitively contact the parent (s)/carers/emergency contacts to ascertain the current family situation and identify who is the adult caring for the child. Where a member of the family is seriously ill in hospital, it will not be expected that the child will be in attendance, and the situation should be monitored.

8.4 Children Missing in Education

In scenarios where a child is supposed to be accessing the curriculum online at home due to their year group being affected by a significant outbreak of the virus, but do not engage with their online school learning for a period of 10 days despite school attempts to contact the parents and engage the child, and where we have **not** been notified by their parent/carer/emergency contact the reason for the child's absence, then consideration will be given to notifying the Local Authority and reporting the child as 'missing in education' as per our statutory duty.

If this child is assessed as currently vulnerable, or where there were safeguarding concerns about the child prior to their having to work online at home due to the significant outbreak of the virus (but they did **not** have an existing Social Worker), then consideration *may* be given to referring our concerns to Children's Social Care, as per our main Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedure 20/21. Where the child **has** an existing Social Worker, the DSL will contact them to inform them that the child is not attending school.

8.5 Other reasons for non-attendance

Illness

A small number of pupils will still be **unable** to attend school (i.e. even when there is no outbreak) in line with public health advice because they are self-isolating and have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves, or because they are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus.

The government advises that 'schools should **not** request evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence before admitting children or welcoming them back after a period of self-isolation. In the majority of cases, schools and parents will be in agreement that a child with symptoms should **not** attend school, given the potential risk to others'.

Shielding

Shielding advice for children was paused on 1 August 2020 which means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the 'shielded patient list' **can** now attend school, as can those who have *family members who were shielding* - read the [current advice on shielding](#). Pupils who remain under the care of a specialist health professional are likely to discuss their care with their health professional at their next planned clinical appointment - you can find more advice from the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health at [COVID-19 - 'shielding' guidance for children and young people](#)

If rates of the virus rise **in local areas**, children (or family members) from that area *who were previously shielding*, and that area only, may be advised to shield during the period where rates remain high and, therefore, they may be *temporarily* unable to attend the school onsite*.

*Where a pupil is unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical or public health advice, schools will endeavour to immediately offer them access to remote online education. There must be no sanctions put in place for non-attendance for the above situation.

Anxiety

The government advises that 'schools should bear in mind the potential concerns of pupils, parents and households who may be reluctant or anxious about returning and put the right support in place to address this. This may include pupils who have themselves been shielding previously but have been advised that this is no longer necessary, those living in households where someone is clinically vulnerable, or those concerned about the comparatively increased risk from coronavirus including those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds or who have certain conditions such as obesity and diabetes.' If this situation should arise, the first step is that the child's individual situation should be discussed with the parent and reassurances given with regards to the health and safety measures being put in place to keep their child safe. That said, the government posits that schools should be clear with parents that pupils of compulsory school age **must** be in school unless a statutory reason applies (for example, the pupil has been granted a leave of absence, is unable to attend because of sickness, is absent for a necessary religious observance).

9. Supporting children's emotional wellbeing during partial or full closure of the school site due to a significant outbreak of the virus

Although we will be operating in a different way to normal due to the partial or full closure of the school site in response to a significant outbreak of the virus, we will continue to support the emotional wellbeing of **all** pupils in partnership with their parents/carers who hold main responsibility for meeting their child needs. Additional support will be offered where operationally possible, during school hours, and in term time only.

Schools will follow the protocol included in the internal guidance document: "Guidance in relation to supporting children's emotional wellbeing during school site closure"

9.1 Pastoral provision

Some children, prior to the partial or full closure of the school site due to a significant outbreak of the virus, may have been receiving *pastoral* support in the form of informal daily or weekly check-ins with nominated staff. For any child who was receiving such support, or who now has identified pastoral need following an outbreak scenario, provision will continue to be put in place to support them at this time where operationally possible, albeit remotely for those year groups not in school.

The pastoral team will retain contact with children who are receiving additional pastoral support via parental telephone weekly check-ins, offers of two to one check-ins with the child with parental permission, and/or signposting to external organisations or helplines.

9.2 Group weekly 'Wellbeing Check-ins'

All children *who are learning online at home due to the partial or full closure of the school site due to a significant outbreak of the virus* will be offered weekly 'Wellbeing Check-ins' where operationally possible. These sessions will require parental permission, be held in **groups**, and will take place via Microsoft Teams. Two members of staff will facilitate these groups where operationally possible, in order to safeguard the children and professional. These sessions do not need to be recorded.

The pastoral team, including Head's of Year/DDSL team will supervise the operation of Well being Check-ins'. Tutors are likely to be involved in the delivery of these 'check-in's' as they know their tutees and are well placed to support during lockdown/periods of absence.

9.3 Individual wellbeing check-ins

Those children *who are learning online at home due to the partial or full closure of the school site due to a significant outbreak of the virus*, identified as requiring further emotional wellbeing support, in addition to the above *group* sessions, will be offered *individual* support where operationally possible. These sessions will be facilitated by two members of staff in order to safeguard the child and professionals. This session will require parental permission and take place via Microsoft Teams. These sessions do not need to be recorded.

The pastoral team, including Head's of Year/DDSL team will supervise the operation of 'individual well being check-ins'. These sessions may in addition be supported by teacher mentors/school counsellor who may have been working with the young person prior to closure.

We will also signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support positive emotional wellbeing at this time of school site closure due to a significant outbreak of the virus. Through thought for the day, school assemblies and email communication. The school Green Book has a page of external contacts that offer support for students that is freely available online.

10. Online Safety (including peer on peer abuse)

Whilst there is no statutory guidance relating to facilitating online lessons, children should continue to be protected when they are online during school site closure. Existing policies and procedures should be followed as far as reasonably and operationally possible, plus previously issued guidance with regards to remote and online learning, including the use of the recently issued one to one devices. The starting point for online teaching should be that the same principles apply as set out in the school's Code of Conduct, particularly with regards to maintaining clear professional boundaries. The DSL should be available and contactable during school hours in case an issue is encountered in remote/online teaching. Staff should **not** use any personal IT equipment.

10.1 In schools where Emergency Provision is being offered for children of key workers, those children who have an EHCP, and those children who have a Social Worker:

Where emergency provision is able to be offered during this time of partial or full closure of the school site due to a significant outbreak of the virus, we will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place *in school*. If local IT staff are unavailable for support, our contingency plan is Neil Plant Network Manager, Cognita.

Where staff are **in school** but interacting with children who are learning online from home e.g. facilitating teaching sessions, they will continue to follow our existing Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures 20/21 and other relevant school policies e.g. Digital Learning/Acceptable Use.

10.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online from a remote setting (i.e. their home) during partial or full school site closure due to a significant outbreak of the virus, they will continue to follow our existing Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures 20/21 and other relevant school policies e.g. Digital Learning /Acceptable Use policy, plus guidance issued in March 2020 with regards to remote and online learning. 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 5 of this addendum.

We will make sure children know how to report any concerns they have via their acceptable use agreement. A Brown andy.brown@akeleywoodschool.co.uk is the schools online safety officer.

10.3 One to one working

No one to one teaching should take place other than that agreed by the Headteacher. Anyone to one working must be facilitated via Microsoft Teams and the session **must** be recorded in order to safeguard the child and professional. This includes situations where specific individual children are supported in Teams 'break out' rooms by a learning support assistant/additional teacher 1:1. The parent and facilitator of the lesson/break out room will be asked to read, understand and agree to follow the protocol provided in the following guidance, previously issued in March 2020:

- Guidance for Headteachers in relation to supporting children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and those with additional learning needs
- Guidance around peripatetic teachers delivering one to one online sessions
- Guidance in relation to supporting children's emotional wellbeing during school site closure

Where existing contracts existed between peripatetic teachers/private counsellors and parents, but sessions were facilitated on school premises, these should continue to take place online as outlined in the guidance above where absolutely possible.

If this is not possible, due to the year group of the child and/or platform for learning not being available for the peri, then the peripatetic teacher/counsellor and the child's parents can continue during school site closure with a private arrangement in order that the child's education/care is not disrupted. However please note this type of arrangement falls outside of Cognita policy; this private arrangement will not be arranged or involve Cognita staff, and all parties should be made aware of the changes

10.4 Supporting parents and carers

We will make sure parents and carers:

- Are aware of the potential risks to their children online and the importance of their child staying safe online
- Understand the balance between taking an interest in what the child is doing online whilst respecting their child's a right to privacy (older children)
- 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, including how to set parental controls and filtering (www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/)

10.5 Peer on Peer abuse

Whilst arguably *direct* peer on peer abuse *may* be less likely to occur during any time of full closure of the school site due an outbreak of the virus, we are mindful that our children *may* be increasingly vulnerable to *online* peer on peer abuse, mainly because of the increase in screen time. This may arise in the form of cyber bullying, coercion, sexting, and the sharing of indecent images/inappropriate content. We will continue to follow the principles set out in our main Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures 20/21 and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) when supporting victims of online peer-on-peer abuse (and their parents). Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately by following normal process and informing the DSL.

We will support the children to know:

- Who they can contact for help and support with regards to online bullying and/or online peer on peer abuse
- How the school will manage the above if occurring during online school lessons, including sanctions if pupils transgress guidelines

11. Staff recruitment, training and induction during school site closure due to an outbreak of the virus

11.1 Recruiting new staff and volunteers

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that Cognita employees, third party contractors and volunteers who work in/for school are safe to work with children.

Should school sites not be able to be open due to an outbreak of the virus, other than for emergency provision, when validating proof of identity documents to apply for a DBS check, we will initially accept verification of scanned documents via online video link, 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 site, once it has re-opened following any outbreak.

11.2 Staff 'on loan' from other Cognita schools

Staff 'on loan' from other Cognita schools, and Cognita owned companies e.g. the Active Learning Group working in our school will have received the appropriate checks so there is no need to complete a risk assessment. Where a risk assessment is already in place for that staff member, this will need to be reviewed prior to that staff member being able to be 'on loan'.

11.3 Safeguarding induction and training

We will make sure any new staff employed during the closure of the school site due to an outbreak of the virus are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements.

New staff will continue to receive:

- A safeguarding induction from the DSL (online as needed)
- A copy of our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedure (and this addendum)
- A copy of our Code of Conduct
- Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1

All new starters during the closure of the school site due to an outbreak of the virus will also be required to sign the Annual Declaration.

We will decide on a case-by-case basis what level of safeguarding induction staff 'on loan' from other Cognita school's need. In most cases, this will be:

- A copy of **our** school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedure (and this addendum)
- A copy of **our** school Code of Conduct
- Confirmation of **our** school's local processes
- Confirmation of **our** school's DSL arrangements

11.4 Keeping records of who is on site if offering Emergency Provision

We will keep a record of which staff are on site each day offering emergency provision and ensure that appropriate checks have been carried out for them.

We will continue to keep our Single Central Record (SCR) up to date.

We will use the SCR to log everyone working at our school each day including staff 'on loan'.

12. Policy review arrangements

This policy will be regularly reviewed centrally by Cognita as guidance from the Department for Education is updated by Alison Barnett (Regional Safeguarding Lead – Europe). At every review, any changes or amendments will be approved by Simon Camby (Group Director of Education) and Jayne Pinchbeck (Group Legal Counsel).