

Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum Inclusion Hampshire



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Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Head of Pre -16: Matthew Atkinson	matthew.atkinson@inclusionhampshire.org.uk
	Head of Post 16: Marie Greenhalgh	marie.greenhalgh@inclusionhampshire.org.uk
Deputy DSL	Jane Gardner -Pastoral Manager	jane.gardner@inclusionhampshire.org.uk
	Ele Murphy - Assistant Head of Pre-16	ele.murphy@inclusionhampshire.org.uk

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from the local authority (LA) and government advice.

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](#), and should be read in conjunction with that policy.

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 should be available at all times (see section 4 for details of our arrangements)
- It's essential that unsuitable people don't enter the school workforce or gain access to children
- 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. It is still vitally important to do this.

As a reminder, all staff should continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements

We have a trained DSL or deputy DSL available at all times. Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

We will keep all staff and volunteers informed by email if there are any changes to the DSL or Deputy DSL on any given day, and how to contact them.

We will ensure that DSLs (and deputies), wherever their location, know who the most vulnerable children in our provision are.

5. Working with other agencies

We will continue to work with children's social care, and with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

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

- Our local safeguarding partners
- 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
- Government advice

6. Monitoring attendance

As most children will not be attending their provision 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.

We are using the Department for Education's form to keep an accurate record of closure.

We have contacted parents and carers prior to closure to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details, and additional contact details where possible.

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.

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 as instructed in our main Safeguarding Policy

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 for children not attending school

9.1 Contact plans

We have a Learning Continuity Plan in place for learners during closure:

These plans set out:

- How often Inclusion Hampshire will make contact
- Which staff member(s) will make contact
- How they will make contact
- Continuing education and pastoral/ therapeutic support

9.2 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 particular, children are likely to be spending more time online (see section 10 below).

10. Online safety

10.1 In Inclusion Hampshire

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in our provisions and when using our online systems.

10.2 Outside Inclusion Hampshire

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing Internet and Email usage policy and Social Media 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 Inclusion Hampshire, 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 Inclusion Hampshire is asking children to do online, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our organisation.

- Are aware that they should only use reputable online companies or tutors if they wish to supplement the remote teaching and resources Inclusion Hampshire provides
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

11. Mental health

We will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils.

- Continued pastoral care, led by our Pastoral Manager, Jane Gardner
- Counsellors and the therapeutic team will continue to be available to learners to access therapeutic support via telephone or email
- Telephone numbers and website links will be provided on our website and social media pages to signpost those with health concerns to the appropriate services

We will also signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time.

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

12. Staff recruitment, training and induction

12.1 Recruiting new staff and volunteers

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that adults and volunteers who work at Inclusion Hampshire are safe to work with children.

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

In urgent cases, 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 Inclusion Hampshire.

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 Children Safe in Education.

12.2 Staff 'on loan' from other schools

Should we reach the stage where we re-open and have staff 'on loan', we will assess the risks of staff 'on loan' working in our organisation, and seek assurance from the 'loaning' school/organisation that staff have had the appropriate checks.

We will also use the DBS Update Service, where these staff have signed up to it, to check for any new information.

12.3 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

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

- A copy of our child protection policy and this addendum
- Confirmation of local processes
- Confirmation of DSL arrangements

12.4 Keeping records of who's on site

If any staff are required on site at any time during closure, 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.

13. Children attending other settings

Where children are temporarily required to attend another setting, we will make sure the receiving school is provided with any relevant welfare and child protection information.

Wherever possible, our DSL (or deputy) and/or Heads of Provision 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

We will share this information before the child arrives as far as is possible, and otherwise as soon as possible afterwards.

14. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated, and as a minimum monthly by Marie Greenhalgh, Head of Post 16 & DSL, each review will be approved by the Safeguarding Trustee on behalf of the Trustees.

15. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection policy
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy
- Whistle blowing policy
- Anti- bullying policy