

	Annex to Child Protection Policy: Safeguarding during the period of enforced school closure caused by the Covid19 Pandemic	
	March 2020	
	Linked Governor: Tracey Evans	SLT Member: Rich Peters

1. Over-arching principles

The way schools and colleges are currently operating in response to coronavirus (COVID-19) is fundamentally different to business as usual, however, a number of important safeguarding principles remain the same:

- with regard to safeguarding, the best interests of children must always continue to come first
- if anyone in a school has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act and act immediately
- a DSL or Deputy DSL should be available
- it is essential that unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children
- children should continue to be protected when they are online

Ashlyns School's staff will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This will be especially important during the COVID-19 period.

2. Reporting safeguarding concerns

It is important that all stakeholders continue to act immediately on any safeguarding concerns.

Where members of staff or the community have safeguarding concerns which can no longer be raised in person in the ongoing lockdown, they can be raised through the following channels:

If a child is at immediate risk of significant harm:

- **Via phonecall to Children's Services 0300 123 4043**
- **Via phonecall to 999 Police**

If there are concerns but the child is not at immediate risk of significant harm:

- Via email to the safeguarding team: admin@ashlyns.herts.sch.uk, putting 'safeguarding' in the title. The admin email is monitored constantly; we have a team of 7 staff trained to Level 2 Safeguarding status, one of whom will call you back

If there are concerns about a staff member or volunteer who may pose a safeguarding risk to children, staff should continue to follow existing procedures detailed in section 11 of the school [Child Protection Policy](#) (reporting to the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors)

3. Safeguarding and supporting vulnerable pupils

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with EHC plans. Further information can be found in the [guidance on vulnerable children and young people](#).

Students with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed by the school in consultation with the local authority (LA) and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school or place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. Most children and young people with EHC plans have needs that can be met at home, because they are not receiving personal care from the school, or their limited need for personal care can be met in the home; in these circumstances they should remain at home, to limit exposure or transmission of the Covid19 virus.

Students who have a social worker: there is an expectation that children with a social worker will attend school provision, unless in consultation with the child's social worker and family it is agreed this is not in the best interests of the child.

4. Safeguarding students accessing school on-site provision (vulnerable students and children of key workers)

Where the needs of vulnerable students cannot be met at home, or where children of critical workers cannot be accommodated at home, a small proportion of students may need to access the school site to work under staff supervision during the school day. Critical workers are defined as parents whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response, including those who work in health and social care and in other critical sectors. However, many parents working in these critical sectors will be able to ensure their child is kept at home. Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.

- School will ensure there are systems in place to check on the welfare of any child expected to access in-school provision who does not attend on any day.
- School will implement guidance on hygiene and social distancing provided by the government: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): implementing social distancing in education and childcare settings](#)

5. Specific arrangements at Ashlyns School to safeguard children who are learning remotely

The school will implement additional procedures including:

- Safeguarding team and Heads of Year will contact the most vulnerable students via phone on a regular basis
- Regular online 'check-ins' by students on their google classroom page with tutors, with the opportunity for students to raise concerns
- Monitoring of engagement with online learning to identify students at risk of falling behind or dropping out of contact
- Promotion of wellbeing guidance to all students through google classroom, RMuNify and weekly bulletins

- Promotion of e-safety guidance, specifically how students and staff can keep themselves safe online, through regular school updates and guidance below
- Communication of this annex to all parents

Online safeguarding

Children who are working online have very clear reporting routes in place so they can raise any concerns whilst online. As well as reporting any concerns to the school, students can also access age-appropriate practical support from the likes of:

- [Childline](#) - for support
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - to report and remove harmful online content
- [CEOP](#) - for advice on making a report about online abuse

Support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online includes:

- [Internet matters](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [London Grid for Learning](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Net-aware](#) - for support for parents and carers from the NSPCC
- [Parent info](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Thinkuknow](#) - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - advice for parents and carers

Parents should encourage students who are working online to do so in a shared space where possible, to keep webcams covered and not stream live images of themselves or others online.

6. Looked after-children

The school will continue to work with and support children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

7. Peer-on-peer and domestic abuse

All stakeholders should be alert to the increased risk of peer on peer abuse and domestic violence that can result from isolation and lockdown, and report concerns promptly.

8. Collaboration or hub settings

In the event of the school collaborating with other schools to cluster children and/or staff from multiple settings in one place, the principles in Keeping Children Safe In Education (KCSIE) continue to apply. In particular, the school which is acting as the hub in the cluster should continue to provide a safe environment, keep children safe and ensure staff and volunteers have been appropriately checked and risk assessments carried out as required.

It is important that all staff and volunteers are aware of the revised arrangements in this annex to the policy, and are kept up to date as it is revised. The Child Protection Policy and this annex will continue to be made available publicly.

This annex has been compiled with reference to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers>

<https://www.ascl.org.uk/ASCL/media/ASCL/Help%20and%20advice/Leadership%20and%20governance/Joint-union-advice-on-COVID-19.pdf>