



# **Safeguarding during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic**

[This appendix has been created in line with DfE guidance.]

## **Statement of intent**

We understand that we face a time of great uncertainty and, as a school, we are doing all we can to provide clarity and safety to the school community. This appendix includes provisions which the school will have due regard for during the coronavirus pandemic. The information in this section is under constant review and is updated to reflect changes to government and local guidance as it is released.

## **1. Key definitions**

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions will be utilised:

**Children of critical workers:** children of parents who work in the following industries:

- Health and social care, e.g. doctors and nurses
- Education and childcare, e.g. teachers and DSLs
- Key public services, e.g. the justice system
- Local and national government, e.g. administrative occupations
- Food and other necessary goods, e.g. supermarket workers and grocers
- Public safety and national security, e.g. police and ministry of defence workers
- Transport, e.g. freight transport workers and train drivers
- Utilities, communication and financial services, e.g. bankers, oil workers, and telecommunications (999 and 111 critical services)

**Vulnerable children:** children who:

- Are supported by social care.
- Are on the edge of receiving support from social care.
- Have safeguarding and welfare needs.
- Have child in need plans.
- Have child protection plans.
- Are LAC.
- Are young carers.
- Are disabled.
- Have an EHC plan.
- Are adopted.
- Are living in temporary accommodation.
- Are at risk of becoming not in education, employment, or training (NEET).
- Are assessed as otherwise vulnerable by education providers or LAs.
- A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

## **2. The role of the DSL and their deputies**

In light of the current pandemic, the school will have additional measures in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of its pupils – this approach will be led by the DSL.

The school will have a trained DSL or their deputy on site while all pupils attend school.

Where a DSL or deputy are unavailable on site, e.g. due to illness, a member of the SLT will take responsibility for coordinating safeguarding within the school, liaising with the DSL of Penketh South Primary. Their role will include:

- Updating and managing access to child protection files.
- Liaising with the offsite DSL or deputy.
- Liaising with children's social care services where required.

During the pandemic, the DSL and their deputy will be responsible for:

- Sharing their time and resources with other schools, where necessary.
- Ensuring staff are kept up-to-date with the latest safeguarding information and developments, including via the safeguarding partners, newsletters and professional advice groups.

- Updating this Appendix in line with the continual changes to education policy released by the DfE and communicating all changes to staff and volunteers.
- Working with the Virtual School Head and wider LA to protect vulnerable children.
- Providing support to teachers and pastoral staff to ensure that contact is maintained with pupils at home and their families.
- Ensuring staff are aware of reporting channels for safeguarding concerns.
- Ensuring there is a consistent approach to safeguarding children throughout the coronavirus pandemic.
- Speaking to pupils directly where possible to identify any concerns and ensuring pupils are provided with clear communication channels so they can report any concerns they have, including reports of peer-on-peer abuse.
- Providing all volunteers and volunteer staff with copies of this policy.
- Identifying a suitable member of the SLT to assume the role of temporary DSL should both themselves and their deputies become unable to work, e.g. due to illness.
- Sharing their contact information with the school community.
- Identifying vulnerable children and communicating additional safeguarding provisions to pupils and their families.

The DSL will report back to the governing board on all relevant safeguarding concerns.

The DSL will work with the local safeguarding partners to ensure pupils remain safe during full opening.

All online or telephone communication will be made using school accounts or telephone numbers. If any staff need to use their personal number, this is withheld.

### **3. Attendance**

From the start of the Autumn term, attendance will be mandatory.

The Attendance Policy will be followed in responding to unauthorised absence.

Regular attendance register will be resumed to record attendance after fully opening.

The school will report attendance figures to the DfE using [the educational setting status form](#). This form will be submitted by 12:00pm each weekday.

Parents will not be penalised if their child does not attend school due to following clinical or public health advice to stay at home, e.g. if they are self-isolating.

In circumstances where pupils cannot attend school for reasons related to coronavirus, the school will use the following category of non-attendance: 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)'. This category will only be used in the 2020/2021 academic year in specific circumstances, where a pupil does not attend school because their attendance at school, or travel to school, would go against:

- Guidance from Public Health England (PHE) or the Department of Health and Social Care related to coronavirus.
- Legislation or instruments, e.g. statutory directions, related to coronavirus.

This category of non-attendance will not count as an absence (authorised or unauthorised) and will be recorded using code X. This non-attendance category will be used for the following:

- Pupils who are required to self-isolate as they, or a member of their household, has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus
- Pupils who are required to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus
- Pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine (such as those returning from certain countries)
- Pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable in a future local lockdown scenario only
- Pupils not eligible to attend school in certain local lockdown tiers of restriction, e.g. where attendance is limited to vulnerable pupils and the children of critical workers.

If a pupil is self-isolating due to having symptoms of coronavirus, but subsequently tests negative, code X will only be used up until the time of the negative result. The school will then use code I (illness) if the pupil

remains unwell and stays at home, but will not retroactively amend the previous attendance registers because of the negative result.

The school will record and investigate any absences where a pupil who was expected to attend school did not, or where parents have arranged care for their child who subsequently did not attend. Where relevant, the school will report to social workers any pupil absence.

The school will ensure that all pupils' emergency contact information is correct and encourage parents to provide as many contact numbers as possible.

#### **4. Online safety and security**

The school will continue to ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect pupils when they are online on the school's IT systems.

All online programmes used will be checked by the school's DPO and DSL to ensure they are reputable and GDPR compliant.

The ICT technician will work to ensure any loaned devices are secure and have the necessary antivirus malware protection downloaded.

Any online queries which require the ICT technician will be addressed over the phone or online as much as possible – face-to-face contact is kept to a minimum.

Where the ICT technician is unavailable, the school will seek the support of other ICT staff, either internally or from another school.

The DSL will report back to the governing board how they are ensuring pupils remain safe online during partial school closure.

Pupils will report any suspicious online activity they encounter to the DSL.

Staff will adhere to the Staff Code of Conduct at all times when delivering education online.

Staff will continue to look out for signs of a child being at risk online and report concerns over a pupil's safety online to the DSL. Where relevant, the DSL will make referrals to the police and children's social care.

The school will collaborate with parents to reinforce the importance of online safety, and encourage parents to set age-appropriate parental controls on digital devices and use internet filters to block malicious websites.

Pupils will be provided with useful information and contact details of individuals and organisations they can turn to should they feel unsafe online, e.g. Childline or the UK Safer Internet Centre.

#### **5. Mental health and pastoral care**

The school understands how the coronavirus pandemic can cause pupils and staff to feel anxious and concerned and will offer any essential support required to those in need.

The headteacher will maintain regular contact with staff and encourage other Senior Leaders to do this also, to ensure they feel supported during this stressful time.

Pupils will be provided with different resources they can access to help them cope with their mental health, including Childline and other online services.

Face-to-face support will only be provided where two-metre social distancing can be adhered to.

Teachers will have due regard for the negative impact the current pandemic may have had on pupils, especially when setting expectations for pupils' work.

Pastoral support will be offered to any family who requires it.

For pupils who are receiving education at home, e.g. pupils who are self-isolating, the school will help parents and pupils make a weekly plan or structure that includes time for education, playing and relaxing.

The school will consider one-to-one support for those who may benefit the most from it, e.g. for pupils with SEND.

## **6. Remote education**

Teachers will plan online lessons with the safety of pupils in mind – the school does not expect teachers to live stream lessons.

Staff communicating with pupils or parents via videocall will do so from within the school, or from a quiet room with a neutral background if working from home.

Teachers will ensure all online planning processes for pupils who are working online will have clear reporting routes to the school and external agencies so they can raise concerns whilst online.

The school will collaborate with the LA where possible when planning online lessons and activities, and considering online safety.

The DSL will ensure every pupil has their contact information so they know how they can contact them about any safeguarding concern.

Pupils will be provided with online safety information by their teacher.

Pupils will be directed to practical online support, such as Childline, where they feel unsafe and require support outside of school.

Parents will be given a list of websites their child may access and any information regarding online sessions with staff that their child will be participating in.

Parents will be provided with the contact details of the DSL so they can report any concerns.

When communicating online, staff will:

- Communicate within school hours as much as possible.
- Communicate through the school channels approved by the SLT.
- Use school email accounts over personal accounts wherever possible.
- Use school devices over personal devices wherever possible.
- Not share personal information.

## **7. Pupils moving schools**

Where school pupils are moving to another setting, the school will continue to do whatever they reasonably can to provide the receiving institution with any relevant welfare and child protection information.

The DSL will ensure that the receiving school has access to pupils' EHC plans, child in need plans, child protection plans or, for LAC, their personal education plan, and is informed who the child's social worker is (and, for LAC, who the responsible Virtual School Head is).

## **8. Monitoring and review**

The DSL will be responsible for continually monitoring DfE updates and updating this appendix in line with any government guidance changes and up-to-date guidance from the local safeguarding partners.

Any changes to this appendix will be communicated to all staff, parents and relevant stakeholders.