

Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

Woolgrove School, Special Needs Academy



Approved by:	Lisa Hall/John Hayes	Date: 6 th April 2020
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Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Richard Pritchard	01462 622 422 richardpritchard@woolgrove.herts.sch.uk
Deputy DSL	Lisa Hall Vicky Litchfield Sue Pitchers Anne Linnell Louise Baldwin	01462 622422 dsp@woolgrove.herts.sch.uk
Headteacher	Lisa Hall	01462 622422 head@woolgrove.herts.sch.uk
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	LADO team	LADO.Referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk
Chair of governors	John Hayes	johnhayes@woolgrove.herts.sch.uk

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from our 3 local safeguarding partners:

- Hertfordshire County Council
- Hertfordshire Constabulary
- East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group/ Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group.

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. Concerns should continue to be logged, wherever possible, on **CPOMS** or passed immediately to a **DSP** if it is suspected that a **child or family are at risk of harm**.

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

Woolgrove School will aim have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site **AT ALL TIMES**. All of SLT at Woolgrove are trained DSPs and are up to date with current training. Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

If, for whatever reason, our DSL (or deputy) can't be in school, they can be contacted remotely by email:

dsp@woolgrove.herts.sch.uk

We will ensure that DSLs (and deputies), wherever their location, know who the most vulnerable children in our school are. The DSL (and deputies) will be responsible for liaising with the off-site DSL (or deputy) to make sure they (the senior leader) 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, 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 3 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

The following guidance from **Hertfordshire County Council** is currently in place:

Safeguarding during the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic (3)

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 or college has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act immediately
- a DSL or deputy 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

School and college staff should 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.

If you have concerns about immediate risk of harm to a child, a referral should be made immediately to Children's Services: Safeguarding and Specialist Services on 0300 123 4043.

Schools and colleges can ring the Consultation Hub (for concerns that are not of immediate risk of harm), please call (01438) 737511.

Referrals to LADO should be made on the LADO referral form and sent to: LADO.Referral@hertfordshire.gov.uk.

If the LADO referral is out of office hours please ring 0300 1234043 or the police on 101

6. Monitoring attendance

As most children will not be attending school 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.

The exception to this is where any child we expect to attend school during the closure doesn't attend, or stops attending. In these cases we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, by phone call and make records of non-attendance and the reasons why
- Notify their social worker, where they have one

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, 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 and **Woolgrove School Whistle blowing** Policy. Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately as directed in the above 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. Support for children who aren't 'vulnerable' but where we have concerns

We have the option to offer places in school to children who don't meet the Department for Education's definition of 'vulnerable', but who we have safeguarding concerns about (e.g children who have previously had a social worker, or who haven't met the threshold for a referral but where staff have raised concerns or may pose a significant behavioural problem at home). We will work with parents/carers to do this. If these children will not be attending school, we will put a contact plan in place, as explained in section 10.1 below.

10. Safeguarding for children not attending school

10.1 Contact plans

We have contact plans for children with a social worker and children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where:

- They won't be attending school (for example where the school, parent/carer and social worker, if relevant, have decided together that this wouldn't be in the child's best interests); or

- › They would usually attend but have to self-isolate

These plans set out:

- › How often the school will make contact
- › Which staff member(s) will make contact
- › How they will make contact
- › The families main presenting need

We have agreed these plans with children's social care/Virtual school where relevant, and will review them on an ongoing basis.

If we can't make contact, we will try secondary/emergency contact numbers or, if necessary, contact children's social care or the police.

10.2 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 11 below).

11. Online safety

11.1 In school

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

If IT staff are unavailable, our contingency plan is to contact and seek advice and support from Herts For Learning Data Management Services, <https://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/traded/sitss/>, helpdesk telephone: 01438 844777

11.2 Outside school

Staff should continue to follow our existing code of conduct/IT acceptable use policy. When accessing online training, resources or communicating with staff. Staff should continue to only use their **school email address** to communicate regarding school business.

Staff should only communicate with pupils/parents via **Marvellous Me** or via the Woolgrove home learning email address overseen by SLT. Please see attached documents:

- Online Teaching and Learning Policy Coronavirus Covid-19 arrangements
- STAFF_Keeping Safe Online While Working from Home

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 parents know how to report any concerns they have back to our school, and signpost them to other sources of support too.

11.3 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
- Are aware that they should only use reputable online companies or tutors if they wish to supplement the remote teaching and resources our school provides
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

12. Mental health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils and for parents, where appropriate via regular welfare calls made by SLT

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.

13. Staff recruitment, training and induction

13.1 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.

The DBS service is still operating. Please note that the usual rules apply that, should become necessary, that it is possible to start an individual subject to a full DBS check being returned. However this must be done in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education. Therefore all other checks, including the barred list check as part of the early stage of a DBS submission, must be in place before doing so. If we have cause to do a risk assessment it should be in place and suitable management arrangements for the individual be incorporated.

A fast track service has been set up to cover barred list checks for health care and social care workers being recruited, in connection with the care and treatment of COVID 19 in England and Wales. Please be aware that roles in schools are not deemed in scope for this.

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 our school.

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.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-changes-to-dbs-id-checking-guidelines>

13.2 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

13.3 Keeping records of who's on site

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 as necessary

14. Children attending other settings

Although current national guidance states that children can attend settings other than their own school we would not recommend this due to the vulnerable nature of all our pupils and the fact that Woogrove is a special school.

However, should there be an unavoidable situation where a child or 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 inclusion co-ordinator (INCO) 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

Where the DSL, deputy or SENCO can't share this information, the senior leader(s) identified in section 4 will do this. We will share this information before the child arrives as far as is possible, and otherwise as soon as possible afterwards.

15. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated, and as a minimum **every 3 weeks** by **Richard Pritchard** and **Lisa Hall**. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

16. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection policy
- Staff code of conduct
- Woolgrove Whistleblowing Policy
- Anti Bullying Policy
- Promoting Positive Behaviour
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy

APPENDIX

Online Teaching and Learning Policy Coronavirus
Covid-19 arrangements

STAFF_Keeping Safe Online While Working from
Home



Woolgrove School Special Needs Academy

Online Teaching and Learning Policy: Coronavirus Covid-19 arrangements

This policy outlines the expectations for temporary remote studying for pupils as a result of the fact that the school has had to temporarily suspend its face-to-face learning to remote working in light of Government guidance for Schools on the Coronavirus.

Guidance for all parents and pupils

- The school is endeavouring to maintain a “business as usual approach” to ensure that all our pupils have every opportunity to successfully complete their education.
- Woolgrove will ensure daily learning is uploaded to the school website (<http://woolgrove.herts.sch.uk/>) and emailed via a specific home learning email address (homelearning@woolgrove.herts.sch.uk) during term time. These activities will be differentiated to ensure all learning paths are challenged. These daily activities will include broad range of activities and meet the needs of the different areas of the curriculum: English, Maths, Life Skills, Art, etc.
- Parents are encouraged to lead the activities, support their children and share the children’s learning and success via the specific email address outlined above.
- Where possible teachers will celebrate children’s achievements via email and Marvellous Me contact.

These are suggestions to help you with remote learning and your health and wellbeing.

Create a Space for Work:

Where possible try to create a space for learning that is quiet and away from distractions.

Morning and Daily Routines:

Continue your usual routines as if you are going to school, from your breakfast to shower and dressing routines.

Structure and Schedule your Day:

Organise your learning and your goals for the day. This will help you manage your time. Make sure you understand the targets you are working towards and celebrate the children’s achievements.

The Great Outdoors and Breaks:

Schedule in small breaks throughout the day and a lunchtime. Move about during the day as you would if you were at school and try to get some fresh air (morning workout, morning playtime, lunchtime, yoga sessions, afternoon playtime).

Communication and Connecting:

Remote learning can feel quite isolating at times, so stay in regular touch with your teachers, friends and family. Great ways to stay in contact with friends and family include; phone calls, Skype video calls, Zoom app video calls, face time, writing emails etc.

Online Safety:

Please refer to our guidance on staying safe online. Please report any concerns to the school.



Keeping Safe Online While Working from Home

1. Do not use personal devices (where possible) to do school work.
2. Be aware of your surroundings. Make sure nobody can see over your shoulder.
3. Try not to write down passwords. This can be difficult with the amount of passwords we are expected to remember but just think about what would happen if you lost that paper and somebody found it.
4. Always use your work email for school related business. Do not email documents that contain sensitive information. If you need to; Always password protect these type of documents, send the file in one email and then email the password in a separate email.
5. Never share your passwords, even with other staff.
6. If you are sent a photo or video containing a child or children make sure you delete it as soon as you're finished with it. The last thing you want is to have loads of pictures of children on your phone.
7. If you need to contact a family never use your personal email address and never give them your personal phone number. If you need to call them whilst at home make sure you withhold your number by dialling 141 before their phone number.
8. If you are using a school device at home be careful what websites you access. Think about what would happen if your Internet history popped up on the whiteboard when you come back to work.
9. Do not talk about or discuss work specifics on social media, including House Party meetings. Keep to phone calls.
10. When sending an email only click Reply-All if you are certain everyone in the email chain needs to see your reply and double, or triple, check that you are sending your email to correct person.