



Regents Park Community College

Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

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Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Mr D Strange	02380 325444 ext 231
Deputy DSL	Mrs S Barnes Mrs E Cosford	02380 325444 ext 261 02380 325444 ext 261
Designated member of senior leadership team if DSL (and deputy) can't be on site	As above	
Headteacher	Mrs S Barnes	02380 325444 ext 261
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Jemma Swann	02380 382693 07500 952037
Chair of governors	Mr D Davenport	02380 325444 ext 261

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of phased return following school closure due to COVID-19. It reflects updated advice from our 3 local safeguarding partners Southampton Clinical Commissioning Group, Hampshire Constabulary and Southampton City Council.

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 definition of 'vulnerable children' includes those who:

- Are assessed as being in need, including children:
 - With a child protection plan
 - With a child in need plan
 - Looked after by the local authority
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- Have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or LAs, for example those who are:
 - On the edge of receiving support from children's social care services
 - Adopted
 - At risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
 - Living in temporary accommodation
 - Young carers
 - Considered vulnerable at the provider and LA's discretion

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, both for children continuing to attend or returning to school and those at home.

Regents Park continue to monitor, track and record information in relation to all students and in particular, those that fall into vulnerable groups. This information is logged internally using the LA tracking document and is submitted to the LA weekly.

Where the LA have removed the need to submit this document weekly, Regents Park have continued to use this system internally to monitor the wellbeing and safety of all students.

Regents Park Community College will work with EWS to support and track vulnerable students as the phases of school procedures for COVID 19 develop and change.

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

Regents Park will always have access to a DSL/Deputy DSL on a daily basis. If the DSL/Deputy DSL is working remotely then the allocated SLT on site link for the day will ensure that the DSL/Deputy DSL is contacted as soon as possible and on the same day, in the event that a safeguarding concern arises.

All school staff are aware of the above procedure and how to contact the DSL/Deputy DSL in raising a safeguarding concern.

Where RPCC has moved to Phase 1 of increased opening all staff have been given clear guidance on how to monitor and check on students wellbeing and safety. RPCC have a purpose built tracking system to ensure this wellbeing check is made with all students as they return to school, this will further feed into the schools CPOMs recording system in cases where this is appropriate and if concerns arise.

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

The senior leader 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
- Safeguarding phone calls are made to those students not arriving at school who were otherwise expected to attend

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

6. Monitoring attendance

We will resume taking our attendance register. We will also continue to submit the Department for Education's daily online attendance form, until no longer asked to do so.

Where any child we expect to attend school doesn't attend, or stops attending, we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, by phone call and home visits. This information is logged in the school tracking document – see above
- Notify their social worker, where they have one

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. The tracking document used by RPCC allows the pastoral team to ensure contact has been made with all students and families. Where changes to contact details have been noticed, the school system has been updated. The school also uses SIMs Parent App and SIMs In Touch system to stay in contact with parents. The above systems and protocols ensure that RPCC remains in contact with all students currently on roll on a weekly basis, and more frequently where this is necessary for students and families requiring support.

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 – about both children attending school and those at home.

Existing protocols for separating students from each other at school are in place and continue to be adopted in any phased opening of school including the creation of learning bubbles.

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 – whether those concerns are about staff/volunteers working on site or remotely.

Existing procedures remain in place and staff are aware that concerns and contact can be raised directly with the Headteacher, even when either party are absent from site.

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. Contact plans

We have contact plans for all children at RPCC including those children with a social worker, and other children who we have safeguarding concerns about. All students are contacted weekly and this contact is logged in our tracking document, this will be over the phone, doorstep visits, or a combination of both.

Where children have been identified as falling into a vulnerable category, checks are made to ensure that the offer of support for attending school or seeking help is available if required.

Where appropriate the school will continue to contact and liaise with social workers and other outside agencies on a case by case basis. If concerns have been noted for any student open to external agencies, then this information will be shared in the best interest of safeguarding the child.

Where concerns are raised over children previously unknown or unopen to children services, the DSL/Deputy DSL will follow existing protocols for contacting outside agencies to make the necessary referrals, this includes MASH referrals and contacting the Police, where appropriate.

Where children are subject to existing plans i.e. CPP, CIN, LAC and EHCPs then contact and scheduled meetings continue remotely where this is appropriate and necessary to ensure ongoing monitoring.

10. 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 line with the procedures set out in section 3 above.

10.1 Children returning to school

The DSL (or deputy) will do all they reasonably can to find out from parents and carers whether there have been any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing that they should be aware of before the child returns.

The DSL (and deputy) will be given more time to support staff and children regarding new concerns (and referrals as appropriate) as more children return to school.

Staff and volunteers will be alert to any new safeguarding concerns as they see pupils in person.

10.2 Children at home

The school will maintain contact with children who are not yet returning to school. Staff will try to speak directly to children at home to help identify any concerns. They will use school phones and devices to make calls home. Or, if necessary they will use personal phones but they will withhold their personal number.

Staff and volunteers will look out for signs like:

- Not completing assigned work or logging on to school systems
- No contact from children or families
- Seeming more withdrawn during any class check-ins or video calls

11. Online safety

11.1 In school

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school, our IT staff continue to be available either in school or remotely. Existing systems to ensure appropriate digital and online safety measures remain in place as they would under normal circumstances.

11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff behaviour policy/code of conduct/IT acceptable use policy.

Staff are aware that under current measures, the content and nature of any digital media or communication must adhere to the existing school policies and procedures.

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 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 i.e. Google Classroom, BBC Bitesize etc. Where students do not have internet access, work packs are available to collect in school.
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online
- The school website is updated with frequent information and guidance regarding online safety and other safeguarding concerns. This includes access to key local and national support documents relevant to COVID 19 e.g. advice from Hampshire Police regarding domestic abuse

12. Mental health

12.1 Children returning to school

Staff and volunteers will be aware of the possible effects that this period may have had on pupils' mental health. They will look out for behavioural signs, including pupils being fearful, withdrawn, aggressive, oppositional or excessively clingy, to help identify where support may be needed.

As Regents Park enters Phase 1 of students returning to school, a safeguarding and wellbeing check is conducted and recorded for all students. Where concerns are noted then further contact with the child and family will be made as appropriate to offer support.

12.2 Children at home

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. All concerns are logged and recorded using the school tracking document and followed up with additional support on a case by case basis.

We will also signpost all pupils, parents/carers 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

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.

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.

Similarly, temporary measures allow right to work checks to be carried out by verifying scanned documents on a video call. If we need to take this approach, we will follow [Home Office and Immigration Enforcement guidance](#).

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.

13.2 Staff 'on loan' from other schools

Regents Park are not loaning staff from other schools at this current time.

Should this become necessary, we will assess the risks of staff 'on loan' working in our school, and seek assurance from the 'loaning' school 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.

14. Safeguarding induction and training

We will make sure staff and volunteers are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements.

14.1 New and 'on loan' staff induction

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

14.2 DSL training

The DSL (and deputy) may not be able to take part in training during this period. If this is the case, the DSL (and deputy) will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputy) even if they miss their refresher training.

The DSL (and deputy) will do what they reasonably can to keep up to date with safeguarding developments, such as via safeguarding partners, newsletters and professional advice groups.

15. 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. All staff attending site are logged on the schools InVentry system and logged daily with the DfE. Access to the school site will only be permissible to those that have been authorised by the Headteacher. This will only be granted to those that are already recorded on our single central record.

We will continue to keep our single central record up to date.

16. 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 special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) 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.

17. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or Department for Education is updated, and as a minimum every 3-4 weeks by David Strange, DSL and Carlene Amos, Business Manager. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

18. Transfer of Child Protection, welfare and learning records

We have reached the transition point time of year – where records – often hard copies are needing to be prepared for transfer. It is recommended that settings all formally record any changes to the transfer of child protection, welfare and learning hard copy records at this time.

In light of the current situation it is recommended that where hard file transfer is being carried out by hand, that one of the following processes is adopted and agreed by governors:

Process One

- the sending school arranges a date and time for records to be transferred

- the sending school has contact details for the DSL, HT or SENCO at a receiving school to call to let them know they have arrived on site
- The receiving school ensures the DSL, SENCO or HT are able to take receipt of files, sign receipt of transfer that the sending school will retain.
- The receiving school takes a photo of the signed receipt to store securely or agrees with the sender to receive a copy of the signed receipt via a secure email/ via any comms within 1 day of transfer
- Both parties should adhere to the hand washing guidance/ use of hand sanitiser once transfer is completed

Process Two

- the sending school arranges a date and time for records to be discussed by the two DSLs with key information shared so that all relevant information that the school had decided they had legal position to share, that is in hard copy format is shared
- A dated, record of the pupils discussed and key information shared – should be retained both parties.
- An agreed date and time is set up for the hard copy transfer at the earliest possible date.
- the sending school has contact details for the DSL, HT or SENCO at a receiving school to call to let them know they have arrived on site
- The receiving school ensures the DSL, SENCO or HT are able to take receipt of files, sign receipt of transfer that the sending school will retain.
- The receiving school takes a photo of the signed receipt to store securely or agrees with the sender to receive a copy of the signed receipt via a secure email/ via any comms within 1 day of transfer
- Both parties should adhere to the hand washing guidance/ use of hand sanitiser once transfer is completed

The adoption of one of these processes will ensure that no receiving school is impeded in their safeguarding responsibilities as a result of lack of prior knowledge of relevant safeguarding information. It will enable a school to meet its responsibility to share safeguarding information as set out in KCSiE 2019.

RPCC will be following Process 2 as our preferred option.

19. Addendum to guidance for policy and process during COVID-19 period - Home visits

This specifically relates to consideration regarding home visits where there has been no contact/concerns have been raised/ unclear information as to absence or lack of take-up of places offered/reasons given.

SCC position is at time of writing that visits to homes should be prioritised where a need arises. DSLs and leaders are asked to now formally consider and record the re-establishment of a home visit /doorstep call if they are not able to establish contact by any other means, especially if they have concerns about no contact, reliability of information received through calls/emails to support the safeguarding of pupils, especially those who are not families open to Children's services. In cases where a worker is allocated contact should be made with the worker setting out actions already taken by the school to establish clarity, this could include a "door knock" visit, with a socially distanced conversation held/ child spoken to and seen. This will need to be taken on a case by case basis with steps taken to reduce any potential risk, for example a house visit made but no entry to the home may be appropriate, ensuring those visiting ask and record if they are told if anyone has symptoms or is in the continuing to shield groups as this is important information.

The EWO allocated for your vulnerable pupil audit may be able to support you on a case by case basis in the time up to the summer holiday. Please contact them to discuss if needed, but do not substitute this discussion for formal referral processes if required.

20. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection policy
- Staff code of conduct policy
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Anti-bullying policy