



Child Protection during the COVID-19 Measures

Annex to Child Protection Policy Version 1.0

Context

The way schools and colleges are currently operating in response to coronavirus (COVID-19) is fundamentally different to 'business as usual'. Most children and young people are no longer in a school setting and staff numbers have been affected by the outbreak.

Schools have been asked to provide care for children who are vulnerable and children whose parents or carers are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

This annex to our Child Protection Policy, September 2019-2020 sets out details of our safeguarding arrangements for:

1. Version control and dissemination
2. Safeguarding priority
3. Current school position
4. Safeguarding partners' advice
5. Roles and responsibilities
6. Vulnerable children
7. Increased vulnerability or risk
8. Attendance
9. Reporting concerns about children and staff
10. Safeguarding training and induction
11. Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff
12. Peer on peer abuse
13. Online safety
14. New children at the school
15. Supporting children not in school

Version control and dissemination

This is version 1.0 of this annex. It will be reviewed by our Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (SDSL) or a Deputy (DDSL) on a weekly basis as circumstances continue to evolve or following updated Department for Education advice or

guidance. It is available on the school website and has been made available to staff and families by email.

We will ensure that on any given day all staff will be aware of who the SDSL and DDSLs are and how staff can to speak to them.

Safeguarding priority

During these challenging times the safeguarding of all pupils at Fountaindale, whether they are currently at home or in attendance, continues to be our priority. The following fundamental safeguarding principles remain the same:

- ✓ the best interests of pupils continues to come first
- ✓ if anyone in our school has a safeguarding concern, they will act immediately
- ✓ a senior designated safeguarding lead (SDSL) or deputy DSL will always be available
- ✓ no unsuitable people will be allowed to gain access to pupils
- ✓ pupils should continue to be protected when they are online.

Current school position

Currently Fountaindale is open to children whose parents or carers are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home and also children who are vulnerable and do not have any underlying health issues.

Currently Fountaindale is operating as a 'Hub' School, when necessary, which means pupils and staff from another school are also working within our site. These children and adults have no contact with Fountaindale pupils.

Fountaindale will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. Senior leaders will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate to maximise safety.

Fountaindale will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID19.

Safeguarding Partners' Advice

Fountaindale continues to work closely with safeguarding partners and we will ensure this annex is consistent with their advice. This will include expectations for supporting children with education, health and care plans (EHCPs), the local

authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need.

Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities for safeguarding in Fountaindale remain in line with our Child Protection Policy (September 2019).

When possible, our SDSL or a DDSL will be available on site during the school day. Where this is not possible, we will ensure we have the SDSL or a DDSL available by phone.

Where our DSL or a deputy DSL cannot be on site, then in addition to one of the above options we will also ensure a senior leader from the school takes responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

- ✓ The Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead
 - Jan Collins: jcollins@fountaindale.notts.sch.uk
01623792671/ 07763656133
- ✓ The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
 - Karen Redgate: kredgate@fountaindale.notts.sch.uk
 - 01623792671
- ✓ Designated Safeguarding Lead
 - Donna Chambers; dchambers@fountaindale.notts.sch.uk
- ✓ Designated Safeguarding Governor
 - Deborah White: dwhite@fountaindale.notts.sch.uk

Vulnerable Children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with Education, Health and Care plans (EHCPs)

Those who have a social worker include children who have a child protection plan (CPP) and those who are looked after by the local authority (LAC). 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.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend school, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. Where a parent or carer does not want their child to attend school, and their child is considered vulnerable, we will discuss this with the social worker and explore the reasons for this directly with the parent or carer.

All of our pupils have an EHCP so have been risk-assessed, in consultation with the local authority and parents or carers, to decide whether they need to continue to be

offered a school place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. The majority of our pupils can safely remain at home.

Senior leaders in our school, especially the SDSL and deputies know who our most vulnerable children are, and they have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

We will continue to work with children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

Increased Vulnerability or Risk

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents and carers. Staff will be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home. Where we are providing for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we will ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

Our staff will be aware of the mental health of children and their parents and carers and will contact the SDSL or a deputy if they have any concerns.

Teaching staff are telephoning all families weekly and sending a summary of the conversations to the SDSL which are then uploaded onto MyConcern. Any concerns are reported to the SDSL immediately. All families received a Home Welfare visit before 03.04.2020 and will receive further home visits for as long as the present situation exists. Those pupils identified as being at increased vulnerability continue to have weekly Home Welfare visits carried out by a member of the Safeguarding Team. The results of each visit will be written directly onto the Pupil's Profile on MyConcern. Any concerns raised are assessed within Local Authority procedures and referred to MASH if thresholds are met.

Attendance

Where a pupil is expected but does not arrive at school, we will follow our attendance procedure and attempt to contact the family. If contact cannot be made, the SDSL or a deputy DSL will be informed.

The SDSL or a deputy will attempt to contact the pupil's parent or carer via telephone, Parentmail or text. If contact cannot be made a home visit will be carried out. A risk assessment has been created to ensure staff and the family are not put at risk.

Where a vulnerable child (CPP/LAC/CiN) does not take up their place, we will notify their social worker.

Reporting Concerns about Children or Staff

The importance of all staff acting immediately on any safeguarding concerns remains. Staff will continue to follow our Child Protection procedures and advise the SDSL of any concerns they have about any pupil, including those who are not attending school.

The varied arrangements in place as a result of the COVID-19 measures do not reduce the risks that children may face from staff. As such, it remains extremely important that any allegations of abuse made against staff attending our school are dealt with thoroughly and efficiently and in accordance with our Whistleblowing Procedures.

Staff Training and Induction

For the duration of the COVID-19 measures, our SDSL and DDSLs are unlikely to receive their refresher training. In line with government guidance, our trained SDSL and DDSLs will be classed as trained even if they cannot receive this training.

All current school staff have received safeguarding training and have read Part One and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2019. When new staff are recruited they will receive a safeguarding induction in accordance with our Child Protection Policy.

If staff from another setting attend the school site then, in line with government guidance, we will not undertake any additional safeguarding checks if the setting providing those staff confirm that:

- ✓ the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check and, that in the opinion of that setting, nothing resulted from those checks that provided any caused for concern
- ✓ there are no safeguarding investigations into the conduct of that individual
- ✓ the individual remains suitable to work with children.

Safer Recruitment/Volunteers and Movement of Staff

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children.

When recruiting new staff, we will continue to follow our Safer Recruitment policy

In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking to minimise the need for face-to-face contact.

No volunteers will be allowed into school during school time. Separate direction and Specific Risk Assessments will be created should the Saturday Club request access to the site.

It is essential from a safeguarding perspective that we are aware, on any given day, which staff are on our school site and that the appropriate checks have been carried out on those individuals. We will continue to maintain our single central record (SCR) during these measures to ensure we have this awareness.

Peer on Peer Abuse

We recognise that children can abuse their peers and our staff are clear about the school's policy and procedures regarding peer on peer abuse. All peer on peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. We also recognise that abuse can still occur during a school closure or partial closure and between those children who do attend the school site during these measures.

Our staff will remain vigilant to the signs of peer-on-peer abuse and will follow the process set out in our Child Protection Policy.

Online Safety

It is likely that pupils will be using the internet and engaging with social media far more during this time. Our staff are aware of the signs of cyberbullying and other online risks and our filtering and monitoring software remains in use during this time to safeguarding and support pupils.

Our staff will follow the process for online safety set out in our Child Protection Policy.

Teaching staff are sending daily emails to parents and carers and not contacting pupils directly.

New Pupils at School

Children may join our school from other settings. When they do, we will seek from those settings the relevant welfare and child protection information. This is relevant for all children that join us, but it will be especially important where children are vulnerable.

For vulnerable children we will ensure we understand the reasons for the vulnerability and any arrangements in place to support them. As a minimum we will seek access to that child's child in need plan, child protection plan or, for looked-after children, their personal education plan and know who the child's social worker (and, for looked-after children, who the responsible VSH is).

Ideally this will happen before a child arrives but where that is not possible it will happen as soon as reasonably practicable.

Any exchanges of information will ideally happen at SDSL or DDSL level, and likewise between special educational needs co-ordinators/named individual with oversight of SEN provision for children with EHC plans. However, it is acknowledged this may not always be possible. Where this is the case our school senior leaders will take responsibility.

The SDSL will undertake a risk assessment based on the information received, considering how risks will be managed and which staff need to know the information.

- ✓ This is version 2 of this annex.
- ✓ It will be reviewed by our Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (SDSL) or a Deputy (DDSL) on a weekly basis as circumstances continue to evolve or following updated Department for Education advice or guidance.