

Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

Ulverston Victoria High School



Child Protection and Safeguarding : COVID-19 Addendum

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Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Mrs S Hewson	01229 483900 Mob: 07376292603 she@uvhs.uk
Deputy DSL	Mrs A Cooper	01229 483900 aco@uvhs.uk
Headteacher	Mr M Hardwick	01229 483900 mha@uvhs.uk
Local authority designated officer (LADO)		
Chair of governors	Mrs J Wilkinson	

Local Arrangements

Cumbria Local Authority has a series of school hubs which provide childcare and activities for the children of key workers and for vulnerable children. Colleagues in the LA Inclusion and Social Care Teams are working through caseloads to risk assess those children and young people whose safety and/or needs are best met outside of the home. The LA Learning Improvement Service is matching children to hubs.

Eligible parents requiring support with childcare during the crisis should contact the LA and they will be directed to a hub.

Reporting mechanisms for safeguarding concerns continue to be through the Cumbria Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub.

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 (Cumbria County Council, Cumbria Constabulary and NHS North Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group and NHS Morecambe Bay Clinical Commissioning Group) and local authority (Cumbria)

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
- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:
 - children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services
 - adopted children or children on a special guardianship order
 - those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
 - those living in temporary accommodation
 - those who are young carers
 - those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example, due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
- care leavers

- other children and young people at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health

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 still attending school and those at home.

Staff will communicate any safeguarding concerns immediately to the DSL via mobile phone or school email.

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

A trained DSL or deputy DSL is on site at all times. Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

The UVHS site is open and staffed Monday to Friday. Safeguarding calls are made daily by a limited number of key pastoral staff to ensure vulnerable children and families continue to have contact with school. The DSL is in school and contactable by email or mobile phone. Details of which are available on page 3 of this addendum.

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

All children are registered am and pm and in every lesson via Teams. Patterns of absence are picked up by form tutors and subject teachers and poor and non-engagement is recorded on a SIMs mark sheet. Attendance and poor or non-engagement are monitored and addressed by Pastoral Leaders and other key pastoral staff. If a child is felt to be vulnerable they may be offered a study place in school dependent on staffing and capacity.

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 children at home by notifying the DSL. Support for young people would be offered remotely by phone or through online support e.g NSPCC

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.

Any concerns regarding staff or volunteers should be referred immediately to the Headteacher Mr M Hardwick (mha@uvhs.uk)

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

If these children are not attending school, we will put a contact plan in place, as explained in section 10 below. These are children under the care of CAMHS, children with an Early Help plan, children on alternative provision and/ or flexi-timetables, the Engagement Centre core group, those children being counselled and those on Free School Meals.

10. 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

Each child has an individual plan which sets out :

- How often the school will make contact – this will be at least once a week
- Which staff member(s) will make contact – as far as possible, this will be staff who know the family well
- How staff will make contact – this will be over the phone. If necessary the school's Education Welfare Officer will make 'doorstep visits'.

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them weekly.

If we can't make contact, we will contact children's social care or the police.

11. 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.

For children at home, they 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

Children are likely to be spending more time online during this period – see section 12 below for our approach to online safety both in and outside school.

See section 13 below for information on how we will support pupils' mental health.

12. Online safety

12.1 In school

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

12.2 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 must not meet students in person unless it is a pre-arranged home visit authorised by the DSL or Headteacher as part of safeguarding arrangements during the pandemic. Staff must not contact students on social media or using their personal email.

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.

12.3 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

All parents have been sent a copy of the DfE guidance on keeping your child safe online during the Coronavirus pandemic. In addition materials from the Child Online Protection (CEOP) unit have been circulated to parents.

13. Mental health

We will signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time. All parents have received a student wellbeing guidance pack which contains useful websites and materials on maintaining well-being at this difficult 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.

14. Staff recruitment, training and induction

14.1 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.

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.

14.2 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

14.3 Keeping records of who is on site

We will keep a record of which staff and volunteers are on site each day via the school attendance App, and that appropriate checks have been carried out for them.

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

15. 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.

16. 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 2 weeks by Mrs S Hewson Deputy Headteacher /DSL. At every review, it will be approved by the chair and vice chair of governors since the full governing body is not currently meeting.

17. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection policy
- Staff behaviour policy/code of conduct
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy