



# **Anstey First School**

## **Annex to Child Protection Policy COVID-19 changes to our Child Protection Policy Updated November 2020**

### **Response to COVID-19**

There have been significant changes within our setting in response to the outbreak. Children and staffing are likely to be significantly affected through illness and self-isolation. Despite the changes, the school's Safeguarding Policy is fundamentally the same: **children and young people always come first, staff should respond robustly to safeguarding concerns and contact the DSL in line with our established safeguarding procedure.**

This annex sets out some of the adjustments we are making in line with the changed arrangements in the school and following [advice from government](#) and local agencies.

### **The current school position and local advice**

The school continues to follow all local guidance given. This has been summarised in the 'Practical Guidance for Staff' which is at the end of this document. This shall be reviewed as and when necessary in order to respond to the latest guidance and information available.

### **Reporting arrangements**

The school arrangements continue in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: **Mrs Amy Myers** She can be contacted on the school telephone number during term time/school opening hours (01763 848346) or by emailing [head@anstey.herts.sch.uk](mailto:head@anstey.herts.sch.uk) out of hours (marking this CONFIDENTIAL FAO DSL). If a parent or carer is concerned about the immediate safety or welfare of a child then they should call Children's Services on 0300 123 4043 or 999.

The Deputy DSL is: **Mrs Lynne Vinton**. She can all be contacted by emailing [admin@anstey.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@anstey.herts.sch.uk)

The school's approach ensures the DSL or a deputy is always on site while the school is open. In the unusual circumstance this is not possible the DSL or Deputy DSL will be contactable and the Senior Leadership Team will email all staff by 9am to advise they are acting in an on-site safeguarding role together with contact details for the DSL or Deputy DSL.

Staff will continue to follow the safeguarding procedures and advise the designated safeguarding leads immediately about concerns they have about any child, whether in school or not. COVID-19 means a need for increased vigilance due to the pressures on services, families and young people, rather than a reduction in our standards.

Children's services may be affected by the impact of the virus on staff and an increased demand for services. Where a child is at risk of significant harm there may be a need to be persistent in referring concerns to the local authority. The arrangements for contacting children's services are detailed online at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/childrens-social-care/child-protection/report-child-protection-concern.aspx>

## Identifying vulnerability

The contact levels are based on children's vulnerability and has included consideration of the following circumstances/groups of children:

- Looked After Children
- Previously Looked After Children
- Children subject to a child protection plan
- Children who have, or have previously had, a social worker  
*There is an expectation that children with a social worker **must** attend school (or another school by arrangement), unless in consultation with the child's social worker and family it is agreed this is not in the best interests of the child.*
- Children with an EHCP
- Children on the edge of social care involvement or pending allocation of a social worker
- Other children the school considers vulnerable. More children may be added to this group in response to concerns raised with the DSL. These children can be offered care at school if required.

Each of these children has an individual plan which has been shared with other agencies involved in their care, including where appropriate their social worker and the Virtual School Head for Looked After and previously Looked After Children.

In addition, the following groups have specific arrangements around contact and support from the school.

- Children of key workers who may attend school
- Children at home (Virtual School)

The plans in respect of each child in these groups should state how often they are to be reviewed.

## Attendance

The school is following the [attendance guidance issued by government](#). Where a child is expected and does not arrive the school will follow our attendance procedure and make contact with the family.

Vulnerable children attendance is expected, where it is appropriate for them (that is, where there are no shielding concerns for the child or their household, and/or following a risk assessment for children with an EHC plan), so that they can gain the educational and wellbeing benefits of attending. Vulnerable children – regardless of year group – that have not been attending in the recent period are expected to return to nursery, early years, school or college provision where this would now be appropriate for them to do so. We will work with and support the relevant families and pupils to return to school, where attendance is appropriate. A brief summary of attendance expectations across the different groups of vulnerable children can be found within the following guidance

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers)

We will follow up where any child we expect to attend school during this period doesn't attend, or stops attending. Contact details of parents, social worker and any multi-agency professional working with the child are recorded on the child's file.

In these cases we will:

- 1) Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, by phone and/or home visits if they are not taking up a school place. The regularity of these contacts will be based on our 'RAG' rated risk assessment and any agreement with partner agencies e.g. social workers, family support workers etc

A risk assessment will be undertaken to consider manage the implications of COVID-19 alongside other risks perceived to the child. The risk of COVID-19 **does not override** the duty on the school to ensure children and young people are safe.

### **Staff will be aware of increased risk**

The pressures on children and their families at this time are significant. There will be heightened awareness of family pressures through being contained in a small area, poverty, and financial or health anxiety. These areas should be considered in the setting of any work for children to undertake at home (including recognising the impact of online learning – see below). Staff will be aware of the mental health of both [children](#) and their [parents and carers](#), informing the DSL about any concerns.

### **Supporting children in school**

Anstey First School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils. Our pupils will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. Our Governors and Head Teacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

Anstey First School 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. They will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

We recognise that negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the emotional well-being and mental health of children and their parents. We will refer to the DfE guidance on [mental health and behaviour in schools](#) to help identify children and families who might need additional support, and put this support in place.

As more children will be returning to school in the coming weeks we will completing welfare checks with all of them and assessing if there is any increased vulnerabilities following the period of lock down. We will continue to work with parents and identify the most appropriate support that need to be put in place for children.

### **Mental health**

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for mental health for all pupils. This includes pastoral support and weekly telephone contact to identified pupils. 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.

## Peer on peer abuse

We recognise the potential for abuse to go on between young people, especially in the context of a school closure or partial closure. Our staff will remain vigilant to the signs of peer-on-peer abuse, including those between young people who are not currently attending our provision. Extra care should be taken where groups have mixed age, developmental stages, are attending other schools as an interim measure and similar. When making contact with these families our staff will ask about relationships between learners.

We also address the issue of peer-on-peer abuse in our remote learning curriculum by regularly highlighting safeguarding messages in any work that we do.

## Risk online

Young people will be using the internet more during this period. The school may also use online approaches to deliver training or support. Staff will be aware of the signs and signals of cyberbullying and [other risks online](#) and apply the same child-centred safeguarding practices as when children were learning at the school.

- The school continues to ensure [appropriate filters and monitors are in place](#)
- Our governing body will [review arrangements](#) to ensure they remain appropriate
- The school has taken on board guidance from the [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) on safe remote learning and guidance for [safer working practice](#) from the Safer Recruitment Consortium. We have reviewed the code of conduct and information sharing policy accordingly.
- Staff have discussed the risk that professional boundaries could slip during this exceptional period and been reminded of the school's code of conduct and importance of using school systems to communicate with children and their families.
- Staff have read [the 20 safeguarding considerations for livestreaming prior to delivering any livestreamed sessions](#)
- Children and young people accessing remote learning receive guidance on keeping safe online and know how to raise concerns with the school, [Childline](#), the [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) and [CEOP](#).
- Parents and carers have received information about keeping children safe online with peers, the school, other education offers they may access and the wider internet community. We have set out the school's approach, including the sites children will be asked to access and set out who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online. Parents have been offered the following links:
  - [Internet matters](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
  - [London Grid for Learning](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
  - [Net-aware](#) - for support for parents and carers from the NSPCC
  - [Parent info](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
  - [Thinkuknow](#) - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
  - [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - advice for parents and carers
- Free additional support for staff in responding to online safety issues can be accessed from the [Professionals Online Safety Helpline at the UK Safer Internet Centre](#).

## Allegations or concerns about staff

With such different arrangements young people could be at greater risk of abuse from staff or volunteers. We remind all staff to maintain the view that 'it could happen here' and to immediately report any concern, no matter how small, to the safeguarding team.

Any staff or volunteers from outside our setting will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of the risks and know how to take action if they are concerned.

We have confirmed the arrangements to contact the LADO at the local authority remain unchanged. If necessary, the school will continue to follow the duty to refer to DBS any adult who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult, and to the Teacher Regulation Agency in line with paragraph 166 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 using the address [Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk)

An overview of the support provided by the CPSLO Team can be found at: [http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/child\\_protection/absent.shtml](http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/child_protection/absent.shtml)

Temporary arrangement for Child Protection Consultation HUB – If a consultation is needed regarding concerns about a child, staff can call the CPSLO duty worker in place of the normal consultation HUB line. The duty rota and CPSLO contact details can be found at: [http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/child\\_protection/referral/consultation.shtml](http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/child_protection/referral/consultation.shtml)

## **New staff or volunteers**

New starters must have an induction before starting or on their first morning with the DSL or a deputy. They must read the school child protection policy, the behaviour policy, the whistleblowing policy and the code of conduct. The DSL or deputy will ensure new recruits know who to contact if worried about a child and ensure the new starters are familiar with the child protection procedure.

If staff or volunteers are transferring in from other registered education or childcare settings for a temporary period to support the care of children, we will seek evidence from their setting that:

- the member of staff has completed relevant safeguarding training in line with other similar staff or volunteers,
- they have read Part I and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and
- where the role involves regulated activity and the appropriate DBS check has been undertaken by that setting we will undertake a [written risk assessment](#) to determine whether a new DBS would need to be undertaken. It may be in these exceptional times we can rely on the DBS undertaken by their setting.

Our safeguarding procedures hold strong:

- Volunteers may not be left unsupervised with children until suitable checks have been undertaken. People supervising volunteers must be themselves in regulated activity, able to provide regular, day to day supervision and reasonable in all circumstances to protect the children.
- The school will undertake a written risk assessment on the specific role of each volunteer to decide whether to obtain an enhanced DBS check (with barred list information) for all staff and volunteers new to working in regulated activity in line with [DBS guidance](#).
- When undertaking ID checks on documents for the DBS it is reasonable to [initially check these documents online](#) through a live video link and to accept scanned images of documents for the purpose of applying for the check. The actual documents will then be checked against the scanned images when the employee or volunteer arrives for their first day.
- The school will update the Single Central Record of all staff and volunteers working in the school, including those from other settings. This will include the risk assessment around the DBS. A record will be kept by a senior member of staff from the Emergency Planning Team who is working in the school each day.

## **New children at the school**

Where children join our school from other settings we will require confirmation from the DSL whether they have a Safeguarding File or SEN statement/EHCP. This file must be provided securely **before** the child begins at our school and a call made from our DSL or a deputy to the placing school's DSL to

discuss how best to keep the child safe. In some unusual circumstance this may not be possible.

Information provided must include contact details for any appointed social worker and where relevant for the Virtual School Head. Safeguarding information about children placed in our school will be recorded on our safeguarding system, will be securely copied to the placing school DSL and will be securely returned to the placing school on completion of the child's placement with us so there is a continuous safeguarding record for the child.

The DSL will undertake a risk assessment in respect of any new information received, considering how risks will be managed and which staff need to know about the information. This will be recorded on our safeguarding recording system.

### **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

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

The DfE acknowledge that DSL training is unlikely to take place during this period. Therefore, for the period coronavirus measures are in place, a DSL (or deputy) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputy) even if they miss their refresher training.

We will take full advantage of online training sessions that may be offered through Hertfordshire Children Safeguarding Partnership, as well as any other accredited safeguarding online training offered.

We will continue to keep up to date with safeguarding developments, such as via safeguarding partners, newsletters and professional advice groups.



# Anstey First School

## **COVID-19 CONTINGENCY PLANNING SAFEGUARDING GUIDANCE FOR STAFF**

### **General Principles**

Whenever school is operational, wherever practical, a DSL should be available on site. However, if this situation changed then it is important there is a clear communication strategy available for staff to communicate with DSLs remotely (e.g. via Skype, Microsoft Teams). All communication of a sensitive nature should be exchanged via secure networks. If both DSLs were poorly and unable to work then the most senior member of staff available should consult with the Local Authority/WBNLC (Cluster) schools and could involve making the decision to close the setting and sign post to other services/DSLs within the Learning Community.

Similarly, within the skeleton staff arrangements, there should be provision for appropriate first aid, team teach and specialist expertise where required. If this is not practical or available, due to staff isolation, then the most senior person should risk assess the situation and communicate temporary arrangements to the relevant staff. If the arrangements agreed put anybody at risk or could result in adding additional pressure to essential services, e.g. NHS then this should be discussed with the LA and/or parents to agree whether it is suitable that place continues.

### **Contact with Vulnerable Pupils**

It is important to maintain contact with all families/pupils who the school has defined as vulnerable (this includes CIN, CP & others where there have been recent concerns). The DSL should produce a RAG rated list of all vulnerable children. The risk category will determine the minimum levels of contact which should be adhered to:

<b>RISK CATEGORY</b>	<b>LEVEL OF NEED</b>	<b>FREQUENCY &amp; TYPE OF COMMUNICATION</b>
<b>RED</b>	Most risk of harm or neglect and fewest protective factors. This would include those with a Child Protection Plan.	Contact should be made by a <b>DSL x 2 per week</b> . One of these contacts must be in person, e.g. doorstep checks but the other could be via telephone (unless high risk). Additional visits may also be made by other professionals, e.g. social workers and this should be by agreement with the DSL.
<b>AMBER</b>	Moderate risk of harm but with some protective factors. This would include those identified as a Child in Need and those with an allocated social worker.	Contact should be made by a <b>DSL x 2 per week</b> . However, depending on the needs of the child, both of these could be by telephone. Where there are concerns of abuse or neglect then a doorstep check should be made once each week.
<b>GREEN</b>	Some concerns escalating or unmet needs. This could include those who have been identified as red or amber but now need monitoring.	Contact should be made by a <b>nominated person x 1 per week</b> . This can be greater if the DSL feels it is appropriate. The contact should be made by telephone either by the DSL or another nominated member of staff, e.g. class teacher.

**All contact should be recorded on CPOMS – even if it is just updated notes stating no concerns!**

DSLs should continue to act upon the information shared. This includes liaison with specialist services and social workers where concerns are raised. Where children have long-term or chronic health needs, regular contact should be made with specialist health teams via the SENDCO. Any actions taken should be detailed as per normal safeguarding procedures.

Every DSL/Deputy DSL should ensure that they have access to an internet connected electronic device in the event that they were required to work remotely. If this is the case then appropriate procedures should be followed to ensure confidentiality of data and safeguarding of staff and children. This includes:

- Agreeing & arranging any home visits with another DSL to avoid the possibility of lone working.
- If using a personal telephone to make phone contact, withhold number so that this is not available to the parents/carers.
- Locking/logging out of electronic device after use and ensuring that information is secure at all times (e.g. not visible to others).

In cases of self-isolation, DSLs should take precautions to protect themselves from risk of infection. This includes viewing home/children through a window, standing a metre back from the front door or liaising with a social worker or other professional involved who may be visiting (this limiting the need for DSLs to visit). In this case, the information from the professional who has visited should be shared and added to CPOMS.

In addition to the contact made proactively by the school the DSL **must**, at regular intervals, remind parents/carers of how they too can access services and report safeguarding concerns (even if out of hours). This includes sharing screen shots/weblinks via Twitter and other channels.

Where a school receives an Operation Encompass (domestic violence) notification, the in-box should be checked and appropriate action taken. If the school closes completely then the LA will be informed and the notifications will be received on the first day returning to school.

The DSL should identify/delegate responsibility for contact between the DSLs and/or other appropriate staff.

All notes should clearly indicate the following:

- The type of communication, e.g. in person, on the phone
- Details of parties involved, e.g. which staff visited
- Summary of conversation & any other points to note
- Any recommendations or signposting to services given to family
- Arising actions and next steps (or NFA if just for monitoring)

The notes added should tick the category COVID-19 CLOSURE (under parental contact category) as well as any other relevant categories. This will help us monitor the impact of the current situation on our families.

## **Attendance**

All children are now required to attend school. If children are absent, all usual checks must be made. Children who are absent due to Covid related reasons can be marked 'X'. Children with authorised absence (agreed part-time timetable, etc) will be marked 'C'.

Where there are concerns about the safeguarding or welfare of a child, regardless of whether or not they should be attending school, DSLs should follow their usual channels of communication to report these concerns.

### **Strategy Meetings/Communication with other Professionals**

The school should, as much as is reasonably practical, continue to be involved in meetings related to the safeguarding and welfare of children in our care. However, before meeting in person, consideration should be given to strategies which minimise the risk of infection, e.g. submitting reports rather than attending, meeting via Microsoft Teams or conference calls. In the event that a meeting has to take place, all members should wash their hands, avoid contact or sharing pens etc and the room should be organised so people can sit one metre apart.

### **Covid-19 Impact**

The school recognises that the impact of the virus could be significant and vast for many of our families. This could include some of our vulnerable families facing financial hardship, demonstrating an increase in mental health issues or displaying increasing signs of stress or being unable to cope. DSLs and/or nominated staff should be aware of this and support families wherever they can. This may include signposting to other services via the school website or refer to Early Help or other local organisations.

If a DSL and/or nominated person believes that a child is at increased risk of harm due to the associated impact of Covid-19 then this should be discussed with the DSL (even where there were no previous significant concerns) so that appropriate action could be taken. This could include prioritising the risk via the weekly RAG review of vulnerable children and increasing the contact made with the child/family.

### **Free School Meals**

The school has worked with Herts Catering to provide daily food or vouchers for all children eligible for FSM. All children can now receive a school lunch and FSM vouchers have been put in place for the holiday periods/

### **E-Safety Reminders**

Any staff, but especially those working from remotely from home, are reminded to take note of the guidance available in the links at the beginning of this document. However, with particular reference to video calls (these must not take place with children/parents), the following should be noted:

- Consider information in the background so that your home is not identifiable and nobody is placed at risk, i.e. if you have your own children at home who may not be fully dressed etc.
- Your clothing should be appropriate and, whilst you are not expected to wear formal work attire, you should avoid items of clothing which may expose parts of your body.

Where it has been agreed (by the HT) to share a video with children/parents, the following must be adhered to:

- The video should be one way, i.e. a video/live chat released to individuals rather than a two-way video chat.
- If a two-way video is agreed, this must contain at least two members of staff present before pupils/parents are admitted to the chat room.

**If any staff lack skills/knowledge to engage electronically then they should seek to gain this before commencing any online activity that could put them at risk.**