Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

Addendum compiled by:	Matthew Phillips	**Date: 3rd April 2020**	
Approved by:		**Date:** April 2020	
Last reviewed on:	3rd April 2020		
Next review due by:	2nd May 2020		

Contents

Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Matthew Phillips / Ruth Nicoll (in Steven Bowen's absence)	mphillips@swanbourne.org / rnicoll@swanbourne.org
Deputy DSL	Jane Thorpe / Simone Mitchell / Justine Mitchener / Sarah North	head@swanbourne.org / smitchell@swanbourne.org / jmitchener@swanbourne.org / snorth@swanbourne.org
Designated member of senior leadership team if DSL (and deputy) are unavailable	Karen Hart	khart@swanbourne.org

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from the DfE and Buckinghamshire Local Authority.

It sets out changes to our normal safeguarding 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 safeguarding 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.

Please note changes to DSL for period noted above – Steven Bowen is not available, so Matthew Phillips and Ruth Nicoll will share the responsibilities of a DSL – RN for 3s-8s; MP for 9s- Top Year.

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

We aim to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL available wherever possible. Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

We will keep all school staff and volunteers informed by email as to who will be the DSL (or deputy) if there are any changes to the above stated arrangements.

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

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy available, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding. This will be Karen Hart, Bursar (khart@swanbourne.org).

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

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:

- 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

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. However in the Main House (7s-TY) individual teaching staff have been asked to monitor general attendance in online lessons and report back any regular lack of attendance, though we understand that families may not be able to fulfil a full timetable for their child during this time. Within the Manor House, we ask staff to keep in regular contact with parents and staff should report back any prolonged disengagement with the School.

Therefore the procedure for monitoring absence during this period of remote learning is as follows:

1. Parents are to email absence to their child's **Form Tutor** before 8:45am. This will be noted in the Register on ISAMS.

2. Class Teachers are to take a Register of pupils joining their remote lessons and notify Form Tutors if a child is absent, copying in Personal Tutor.

3. If a pupil is absent and for **two days** and the Form Tutor has not received notification of the absence, a **phone call** must be made to the family home to check that all is well and to make the parent aware that the child has missed two days of lessons. **All** contact numbers must be tried. The message from the Form Tutor should not come across in a chiding manner but rather a concerned manner. Is there anything we can do to support? Are you having technical difficulties?

4. If contact cannot be made via phone then an email must be sent to check all is well. The parents should be asked to contact the school as soon as possible. In addition, RN (3s-8s) and MP (9s-TY) must be notified at this stage.

5. If there is still no response, MP and RN will then call the First Response team for advice.

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 in line with normal safeguarding reporting arrangements.

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 in line with normal safeguarding reporting arrangements.

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 there are 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. 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

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

If we can't make contact, we will 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 our IT staff (support@swanbourne.org) are unavailable, our contingency plan is through HybrIT (info@hybrit.co.uk).

11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff behaviour policy, code of conduct and IT acceptable use policy. Parents and children have been reminded of their responsibilities and their acceptable use agreements. Any breaches of this code should be reported and will be swiftly followed up by one of the DSLs or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Within the documents detailed above are relevant sections of the acceptable use of technology at any time, including staff / pupil relationships, use of social media. For our remote learning we will be using Swanbourne Digital Learning (for which all children from 3s-TY have secure access – or parents, as age appropriate) and Microsoft Teams. Where lessons are taught through Teams, all lessons will be recorded so that they are available to download if required. Under no circumstances should staff's personal email addresses or phone numbers be given to pupils; school email addresses must be used. Individual and paired peripatetic music and LAMDA lessons will be taught remotely through Zoom, and will be similarly recorded. Parents and staff involved have been issued with appropriate consent forms and reminders.

We 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
- 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

We have written to parents and staff at Swanbourne House to explain the changes to our safeguarding team during this time and parents and staff are aware of the safeguarding team's contacts.

12. Mental health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils, through Personal and Form Tutors, and our school counsellor (counsellor@swanbourne.org).

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.

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.

13.2 Staff 'on loan' from other schools

We will assess the risks of any 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.

13.3 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

13.4 Keeping records of adults on site

We will keep a record of which staff and volunteers are on site each day through our normal signing in system, and that appropriate checks have been carried out for them.

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

14. 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, DDSL or SENCO can't share this information, Karen Hart 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 safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every month by Matthew Phillips, Assistant Head. 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:

- Safeguarding policy

- Anti-Bullying Policy

- Staff behaviour policy (including Whistleblowing)

- IT acceptable use policy

- Health and safety policy

- E-safety policy