

Temporary Child Protection / Safeguarding Policy Addendum

COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Roxwell Primary School

Introduction

Schools and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children and, in conjunction with other agencies, they play a vital role in safeguarding children during the current emergency arrangements. This policy is an addition to our existing Child Protection Policy and has been produced to cover arrangements in place during school closure due to Covid-19.

This policy is for all staff, parents, governors, volunteers and the wider school community. It forms part of the safeguarding arrangements for our school and should be read in conjunction with the following:

- the current Child Protection Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020)
- the school Behaviour policy;
- Staff Code of Conduct;
- the safeguarding response to children missing from education;
- the role of the designated safeguarding lead (Annex B of KCSIE)

Current context / statutory framework

Schools have been instructed to close, although are required to offer a place to vulnerable children and children of critical workers.

Parents whose work is critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and EU transition response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors. Children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical worker can go to school if required, but parents and carers should keep their children at home if they can.

Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- 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
- others at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself is not a determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, especially the Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead, and deputy, know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility and discretion to offer a place to individual children on a case by case basis.

Where applicable, Roxwell Primary School will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at increased risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and Roxwell Primary School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent. Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, Roxwell Primary school or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England. Roxwell Primary school will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend school, including remotely if needed.

Safeguarding procedures during the closure period

The DSL and DDSL remain as per the School Child Protection Policy.

The optimal scenario is to have a DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case a DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or remotely - for example if working from home.

Clearly, we are working very differently during this period of closure. However, the principles within our existing Child Protection Policy still apply, as does the duty on all staff to safeguard children. We have assessed the needs of all our pupils and put in place plans to support them and their families during this period of closure. These plans include an education offer (details of our Remote Education Provision Plan have been shared on the school website) and arrangements to support pupils with their safety and wellbeing. These plans may include actions and interventions from other agencies, as we continue to work with partners to provide an appropriate level of support.

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend any multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

Supporting children in school

Roxwell Primary school is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students. We will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site, including first aiders, and that staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

Roxwell Primary 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.

We 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.

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Child Protection Policy. Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Attendance monitoring

Children for whom on-site provision is being provided should be recorded in line with the normal school attendance requirements. Phone calls will be made by the school to the parents/carers of any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not.

In mainstream schools, all pupils who are not expected to be in school during the school partial closure, should be recorded as 'code X'.

Daily welfare checks will be made with pupils who are learning from home via Google Classroom. Where contact is not made by 2pm, we make phone calls home. Where contact is still a concern, further communication can also include emails or door-step visits as appropriate. Other individualised contact methods may also be considered. School will hold a record of all contact made.

Supporting children not in school

Roxwell Primary school is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children. During this period of partial school closure, teachers will set daily remote learning work online via Google Classroom. We recognise that the majority of children will not be physically attending school and that it is likely they will be spending longer periods of time online, which may increase their vulnerability. We will continue to provide parents with information on how to keep their children safe online and resources to support them to do this.

Particularly useful websites are:

- CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection)
- Childnet
- Internet Matters
- Net Aware
- NSPCC
- Parent Info
- Safer Internet

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Staff are aware that children are vulnerable to being bullied or groomed for abuse or radicalisation online. Staff will be vigilant to any signs that this may be occurring and report any concerns in the usual way. It is important that parents make the school aware of any concerns they may have about the online activity of their child, or any particular vulnerability they may have in this respect.

The mental health and wellbeing of all our pupils is always a priority and it is recognised that, without the protective factor of attending school, some of our children may be more vulnerable. This is a worrying and challenging time for everyone and we understand that families will be placed under additional pressures and may be coping with issues such as increased anxiety, financial difficulties, caring for children at home all the time and bereavement. Teachers need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home. It is vital that we work in partnership with parents to support the well-being of our pupils. Parents should share any concerns about the well-being of their child with school, so appropriate support and interventions can be identified and implemented.

Teachers will hold daily live sessions with the pupils in their class virtually via Google Classroom as part of their welfare check. Sessions will follow the same principles as set out in the school's code of conduct. The following principles will also be adhered to during any virtual sessions on Google Classroom:

- No 1:1s, groups only.
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms.
- Microphones are on mute until it is a child's turn to speak.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including from any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use the Google Classroom platform to communicate virtually with pupils.
- Staff should record the time, date and attendance of any sessions held.