



# Safeguarding Policy Amendment

Update in line with guidance from Department of Education

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Safeguarding in schools, colleges & other providers

Published 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020

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The COVID 19 Contingency Framework for Education and Child Care settings

Published 7th January 2021

In response to COVID-19 and the current situation in our schools it is essential that **all** staff read and understand the updated information:

## Updated Advice from Safeguarding Partners & the Local Authority

Updated Safeguarding Guidance & Referral Information for Croydon is available from the DSL's and is also on google drive in the Safeguarding & Inclusion Rooms in the COVID19 folder.

## Attendance during Lockdown

Fairchildes Academy Community Trust (FACT) staff and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children with a Child in Need or Child Protection Plan should be attending school – Staff will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not.

Staff will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged a school place for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend.

Phone calls will be made to the parents/carers in these circumstances.

To support the above, staff will, when communicating with parents/carers and carers, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, the DSL will notify their social worker.

In addition to this vulnerable children and families (at Fairchildes) will be monitored as part of the Free School Meal delivery programme, where direct contact can be made, following COVID guidelines.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, staff or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Staff will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend school, including remotely if appropriate, according to their circumstances.

### **Online safety in school**

The Trust will continue to provide a safe environment, including online.

Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

The Trust Schools use Google Classroom to provide online learning for those children who are working remotely, as well as for children attending school. All schools use G Suite which means that the drive is only visible to users within the school.

E-safety information is shared regularly with both children and their parents/carers.

### **Supporting children not in school**

The Trust is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people.

Pastoral Teams will support SLT and class teachers in maintaining contact with all pupils working remotely, and in particular vulnerable families. Any concerns or pertinent information will be recorded on CPOMS.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

The Trust recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers.

Teachers within The Trust need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

### **Supporting children in school**

The Trust is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

Schools will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Heads of School will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

The Trust 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.

### **Peer on Peer Abuse**

The Trust recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where a school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within the Safeguarding Policy.

The school will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on CPOMS and appropriate referrals made.

### **What to do if you are worried about a child**

All Staff members and volunteers will be expected to continue to follow our safeguarding procedures set out in the Safeguarding Policy.

**In addition**, staff will need to have a raised awareness of potential concerns during the current situation.

Staff should raise any concerns about a child from their own school setting or from another educational setting that they are working with.

*Concerns may arise:*

*-within the school environment*

*-within the local community – food shortage, domestic violence, abuse*

*-through our online learning platforms (staff should be particularly vigilant for any online peer on peer abuse)*

*-through communications with parents/carers via email, text messaging services or phone calls.*

It is vital that at this critical time of stress for families that we respond and act on *any* safeguarding concerns that we have **both in school and within our communities**.

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding Policy, this includes making a report via CPOMS, which can be done remotely. This must be logged by 4pm on the day the concern is raised.

If there is a concern raised out of hours with regards to a child being at significant risk the staff member should alert the DSL and/or a member of SLT immediately and record the concern on CPOMS whilst ensuring that the concern has been received.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead & Head of School to ensure swift action.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay. In the absence of the DSL then concerns should be raised with the SLT member on site. There will always be an SLT member (from one of the TRUST schools) on the school site.

DSL's will also be contactable by phone should they not be on site that day.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concern to the Head of School.

Concerns around the Head of School should be directed to the Chair of Governors.

DSL's will follow the guidance below from the local authority should it be necessary.

*If you think a child is at IMMEDIATE RISK, call 999 and ask for the Police*

*If you think URGENT action is needed, i.e. same day intervention by a social worker, call the Croydon Single Point of Contact\* on 0208 255 2888*

*For URGENT action OUT OF HOURS, call the Children's Social Care Emergency Duty Service on 0208 726 6400*

### **Arrangements to Support Vulnerable Families**

The safeguarding teams will continue to work with Social Care and Virtual School Headteachers to support identified families.

School will support any families who do not meet the 'vulnerable' definition but whom the school is concerned about. This will be through regular contact, and where appropriate signposting to local and national agencies.

Guidance around online safety will be shared with pupils and parents through google classroom, emails and social media.

Food or vouchers will be distributed to FSM families. Where possible food is delivered directly to families which enables daily 'contact' with them (Fairchildes only). Where families are in particular need referrals are made to outside agencies such as the local food bank.

Eligibility for free school meals alone is not a determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

### **Safeguarding Training and induction**

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2020). The DSL will communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter The Trust, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

### **Children and online safety away from school**

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Safeguarding Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

The Trust will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Many children and families have loaned laptops to assist with online learning during this period and have signed a loan agreement. This includes appropriate usage of the devices in terms of safeguarding and e-safety.

Below are some things to consider IF there are virtual or recorded lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- 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; and the background should be blurred.
- The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Language must be professional and appropriate.
- Staff must only use platforms specified by senior managers and approved by our IT network manager / provider to communicate with pupils

### **Communicating with parents, carers and pupils**

Where education is having to take place remotely due to coronavirus (COVID-19), schools, teachers and pupils will maintain professional practice as much as possible. When communicating online with parents and pupils, schools will:

- communicate within school hours as much as possible (or hours agreed with the school to suit the needs of staff)
- communicate through the school channels approved by the senior leadership team
- use school email accounts (not personal ones)
- use school devices over personal devices wherever possible (if this is not possible then ensure that numbers/contact details are blocked)
- advise teachers not to share personal information

This addendum will be updated in line with DFE Guidance documents.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-contingency-framework-for-education-and-childcare-settings/contingency-framework-education-and-childcare-settings-excluding-universities>

Updated - 12th January 2021