

School Safeguarding and Child Protection - COVID 19 Policy adjustments

Safeguarding and the best interests of the children in our care must continue to come first.

This document sits alongside the following existing school policies;

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Whistleblowing and Managing Allegations
- Peer on Peer Abuse
- Online Safety
- Staff code of conduct (and any associated acceptable use agreements)

KCSIE, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 continues to be the key statutory guidance.

The new arrangements provided by schools during this time must continue to be a safe place for all children attending. Children not attending school during this time must also be safeguarded, including online, the school must action any concerns brought to them.

DSL and Team

Each school must have a DSL or team member in school or available to staff every day. DSL and team members may use DSL and team members from other Havering schools for support and supervision, using the Havering DSL support network list issued by HSIS.

DSL and team members must make sure they have Havering key contact information available to them at home.

DSL or team contact can be by phone or other digital means such as Skype. GDPR and confidentiality must be strictly applied. Staff members should take particular care when making calls, holding or attending meetings from their home.

Staffing

Schools are open as a different provision during this period; staff numbers are reduced. Staff on site must come from the school workforce and all vetting and DBS checks must be in place. Volunteers should not be used. If schools come together to provide Hub services, the staff at a Hub may be drawn from the combining schools, and the same vetting and DBS conditions apply. A DBS issued by a Havering school or childcare provision will be transferrable to another school during this period.

Each school must have a first aider on site each day. This can be shared between schools when on the same site.

Every school open during this period will keep a daily register of all staff on site, this includes those attending for part of a day. This will be retained by the school/Hub. This is in addition to the required school return to DfE listing children in school each day.

Staff on site must know the emergency procedures for:

- Fire evacuation – although staff and pupil numbers are low, the lists of those on site should be on hand to check
- Site evacuation – schools should check that their external place of refuge is still available. This would be a very unusual and exceptional circumstance, but a place of safety should be identified.
- Internal lockdown – staff and children are likely to be spending time in an area of the school that is not as familiar to them. Staff should identify internal locations where they could seek safety with the children in the event of a lockdown.

Safeguarding and Child Protection record keeping

If children move from their school to a Hub provision at another school, the DSL/team member should contact the DSL/team member at the Hub school to make them aware of a current safeguarding/child protection case, and ensure contact details for the child, family and professionals working with the child are shared.

If appropriate parts of the CP record should be shared with the DSL/team at the Hub school. Confidentiality must apply. When schools reopen, all records from a Hub school must return to, and be incorporated into the main child protection record at the host school, and DSL to DSL briefing meetings will ensure a clear handover for each child where there has been ongoing or new concerns during this period. The Hub school should not retain any record for children other than their own.

Safeguarding and Child Protection processes

MASH, Social Care and LAC team have issued revised arrangements;

MASH

All referrals will be responded to as usual. Partners are not physically located in the MASH and are working together, but remotely.

Social Care operating protocol COVID 19 (extract)

This protocol will be reviewed on a daily basis and will be subject to change.

Core response team: There is a Social Care core team available each **day** to respond to statutory requests for services – CIN / CP / LAC. This will be at least 8 social workers, with an additional 8 staff in reserve.

Statutory meetings: All meetings should be undertaken by skype video conferencing where possible to avoid physical contact.

Visits to children: Where Looked after Children are placed 20 miles or more, social workers and their managers will make the determination whether a skype call (or similar) may be more appropriate at the time of the scheduled visit. Social Care will review this weekly to ensure children are appropriately safeguarded and their welfare needs are met.

Children on CP plans / CIN / LAC have been RAG rated according to risk and need. Frequency of visits and telephone / skype are being agreed by the team.

Responding to Child Protection enquiries: Responding to S.47s this is business as usual.

Child Protection Conferences and Looked after Child reviews (LAC) (Extract)

Conduct of Conferences: Minimise meetings and unnecessary direct contact. Chairs will invite professionals, parents and the Minute taker to join the Conference by telephone call or Skype, which will be pre-arranged by the Chair and Business Support Officer (BSO). The Chair will make the decision whether to hold one virtual meeting or several over no more than 3 days to obtain the views of the parent(s) and professionals.

Conduct of Looked after Reviews: Aim to hold LAC reviews, but it will be a paper review utilising conference calls / Skype with professionals, carers, families and child (ren).

This may not take place in one meeting, but several over no more than 3 days.

Attempts will be made by the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) to speak with the child via Skype / telephone dependent on their age, maturity and capability.

IROs will schedule the next LAC review in line with statutory expectations with a view to when the crisis has subsided, at the earliest date, consideration is given on the merits of the review date being brought forward to allow for a full and more comprehensive review can be undertaken.

Keeping in touch with vulnerable children not in school

Vulnerable children not in school should be contacted on a daily basis. This can be by phone or Skype for example. This keeping in touch calling could be undertaken by DSL/Team/Pastoral staff who are working from home.

Planned visits to children will alter over time and will be affected by Government requirements for everyone to remain in their homes.

Reporting concerns about children (face to face or via phone, skype or similar)

All staff, in school or working from home must understand how to raise a concern. This should be immediate reporting to the DSL / Team using existing school processes. Staff could (face to face or digitally);

- Talk to a DSL/Team member if they are in school
- If DSL/team are not in school go to the SLT member in school; additionally contact the DSL or team member by phone, skype or similar
- Use counselling / pastoral / Thrive / ELSA practitioners to support a disclosure in school if the DSL/team are not on site.

In school, safeguarding and child concern procedures remain the same unless the DSL and team have identified process changes needed during this period to ensure concerns can be raised and logged in school and from home. Any changes to process will be communicated with all staff, in writing. The school will check to make sure all staff have read and understood the process change.

All types of risk and harm will sadly continue, it is important that COVID 19 does not overshadow and stop staff from seeing harm and identifying and raising concerns.

If a school is informed through disclosure or second hand information that peer on peer abuse is alleged, the safeguarding process must be followed.

Reporting concerns about adults working with children

Whistleblowing and Managing Allegations processes must be followed if there are any concerns about the conduct or behaviour of an adult in a school/Hub or online. If the Headteacher of the school/Hub cannot be contacted the concern can be taken straight to the LADO. If the concern is about the Headteacher of the school/hub, this should be taken straight to the LADO.

DSL Training, Staff Training, Interim induction arrangements

The required DSL and team training every 2 years may lapse during this period of school closure. The DSL and team must ensure they have opportunities to keep up to date with risks and issues. This may be through safeguarding newsletters or online training. Training can be updated when schools open and face to face DSL, and multi-agency support becomes available again.

Current staff will have attended at least annual whole school training or in year catch up events as part of induction or return to work. If new staff are taken on during this period they should read KCSIE part 1 as part of their induction. Online training opportunities may be used to supplement induction.

Key contacts, national and local guidance

- **MASH Team**
01708 433222 (day)
01708 433999 (night)
tmash@havering.gov.uk
<https://my.havering.gov.uk/Pages/OnlineForms/Multi-Agency-Referral-form.aspx#Information>
- **LADO**
Lisa Kennedy
lado@havering.gov.uk
01708 431653
- **Havering CAD team**
Social Care : CAD Duty - CADDuty@havering.gov.uk
Education: SEN - Sen@havering.gov.uk
- **Hsis Safeguarding Team**
Penny Patterson - penny.patterson@havering.gov.uk 01708 433829
Michelle Wain - michelle.wain@havering.gov.uk 01708 431650
Carol Rockey – carol.rockey@havering.gov.uk 01708 431651
- KCSIE Keeping Children safe in Education 2019
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
- General COVID 19 guidance for educational settings
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>
- Guidance on maintaining educational provision
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision>
- DfE COVID helpline (*I do know how busy many of you have found this service*)
dfecoronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk
0800 046 8687, Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm, and 10am to 4pm at weekends.
This number is for schools and parents, schools should be ready to quote their DfE number.
- HES Hub COVID 19 guidance
<http://www.hes.org.uk/Page/16925>
- Havering Safeguarding Partnership (formerly the Havering LSCB)
https://www.havering.gov.uk/info/20083/safeguarding_children
- NSPCC, Undertaking remote teaching and learning safely
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/news/2020/march/undertaking-remote-teaching-safely/>