



Update

Child protection during COVID -19 measures

Annex to Child Protection Policy

Context

The way schools and colleges are currently operating in response to coronavirus (COVID-19) is different to business as usual. Most children are no longer in an educational setting and staff numbers have been reduced due to the outbreak.

Schools have been asked to provide care for children whose parents/carers are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be cared for at home and those children who are vulnerable, for whom school is a safer environment.

[Advice for the education sector](#) is being updated daily, and the information provide will be used to review the provision laid out in this document.

This annex to our child protection policy sets out our revised safeguarding arrangements for:

1. Dissemination of the revised policy
2. Safeguarding priority
3. School current position
4. Local Authority advice
5. Roles and responsibilities
6. Vulnerable children
7. Attendance
8. Reporting concerns about children and staff
9. Safeguarding training
10. Online safety
11. New children at school

1. Dissemination of the revised policy

This revised policy will be reviewed weekly by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy DSL in line with updated guidance from the Department for Education. This revised policy will be made available to staff by inclusion on the school website and a link will be emailed and sent by SMS to all members of staff.

2. Safeguarding Priority

Keeping Children Safe in Education is statutory guidance that school will continue to prioritise as per our legislative duty. Safeguarding children at our school, whether they are at home or in attendance remains paramount and the following safeguarding principles remain the same:

- The best interests of children must always continue to come first
- If anyone in our school has a safeguarding concern about any child, they must act immediately
- A DSL or deputy DSL will always be available
- No unsuitable persons will be allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children
- Children will continue to be protected when they are online

3. School current position

The school is currently closed to all children apart from those who are from a family where one parent is a critical keyworker in the fight against the COVID-19 outbreak. The school is also continuing to offer provision for vulnerable pupils who have an EHCP and their needs cannot be met at home or those pupils who have a social worker.

All staff and volunteers attending our school will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of safeguarding risks and what to do if they have concerns.

Introduction to Safeguarding and Child Protection – E-Learning

<https://bathnes.learningpool.com/login/index.php>

4. Local Authority Advice

We continue to work closely with the Bath and North East Somerset Community Safety and Safeguarding Partnership (BCSSP) and will ensure this policy is consistent with their advice. This will include supporting children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer (LADO) and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need.

5. Roles and responsibilities

Our roles and responsibilities for safeguarding in school remain as per our Child Protection Policy <https://twertoninfant.files.wordpress.com/2019/08/tisn-safeguarding-and-child-protection-policy-2019-20.pdf>

As such, where possible our DSL or a deputy DSL will be available on site during the school day. Where this is not feasible, we will ensure that either

- A trained DSL or deputy DSL is available by phone or online video, or
- School has access to a trained DSL or deputy DSL from another school or college by phone or online video

Where a trained DSL or deputy is not on site, in addition to one of the above, a senior leader will take responsibility for coordinating safeguarding on site.

The DSL for child protection is George Samios

The deputy DSLs: Hannah Scott, Hala Langan and Kath Patterson

Contact details for the DSL and Deputy DSLs are available in school (in the office and staffroom).

6. Vulnerable Children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a child protection plan and those who are looked after by the local authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed by the school in consultation with the local authority (LA) and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to attend school in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home.

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 severe risk. Where a parent does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, we will discuss this with the social worker and explore the reasons for this, directly with the parent.

All our vulnerable children and young people will be encouraged to attend school.

Senior leaders in our school, in particular the DSL's and deputy DSL know who our most vulnerable children are and have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

We will continue to work with children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head for looked after and previously looked after children.

7. Attendance

School and social workers will be agreeing with families whether their children in need should be attending school and school will follow their attendance procedures with any child they were expecting to attend, that fails to do so. School will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their children and the children subsequently do not attend.

When a vulnerable child does not take up their place, their social worker will be notified.

The Department for Education has introduced [a daily online attendance form](#) to keep a record of critical workers and vulnerable children attending school. This allows for a record of attendance for safeguarding purposes and allows school to provide accurate, up to date data to the department on the number of children taking up places.

8. Reporting concerns about children and staff

The importance of all staff and volunteers acting immediately on any safeguarding concerns remains. Staff and volunteers will continue to follow our Child Protection procedures [\[link\]](#) and advise the DSL of any concerns they have about any child, including those who are not attending school.

The arrangements in place as a result of the COVID-19 measures do not reduce the risks that children may face from staff or volunteers. As such, it remains extremely important that any allegations of abuse made against staff or volunteers attending our school are dealt with thoroughly and efficiently and in accordance with our Allegations Against Staff Policy

https://twertoninfant.files.wordpress.com/2020/04/twi_managing-allegatons.pdf

9. Safeguarding training

During COVID-19 measures, DSLs and deputy DSLs are unlikely to receive refresher training. |In line with government guidance, for the duration COVID-19 measures are in place, a DSL or deputy DSL who has been trained, will continue to be classed as trained.

All existing school staff have received safeguarding training and read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education. When new staff or volunteers join us they will be provided with a safeguarding induction in line with our Child Protection Policy.

If staff join us from another school to support on a temporary basis, the level of safeguarding induction required will be judged on an individual basis.

In line with government guidance, we will not undertake any additional safeguarding checks if the setting they are coming from can confirm the following:

- The individual has an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check, and that in the opinion of the setting, nothing resulted from those checks that provided cause for concern,
- There are no safeguarding investigations into the conduct of that individual,
- The individual remains suitable to work with children

9. Safer recruitment

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children.

When recruiting new staff we will adhere to our Safer Recruitment Policy

<https://twertoninfant.files.wordpress.com/2018/12/TWI-Safer-Recruitment-May-2017.pdf>

In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its [guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking](#) to minimise the need for face-to-face contact.

We will continue to follow our legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult.

For volunteers we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to engage in regulated activity.

It is essential from a safeguarding perspective that we are aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school or college, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, we will continue to keep our single central record (SCR) up to date.

10. Online safety

It is likely that children will be spending more time than ever online and school will continue to ensure appropriate filters and monitoring systems ([guidance on what 'appropriate' looks like](#)) are in place to protect children when they are online on the schools IT systems or recommended resources.

Staff who interact with children, including online, will continue to look out for signs that a child may be at risk in line with our Child Protection Policy. Appropriate referrals will still be made to children's social care and the police via the DSL or deputy DSL.

11. New children at school

If children from our school are attending another setting, we will provide the receiving setting with any relevant welfare and child protection information. If we are receiving children from another setting we will secure the same level of information. This is particularly important where a child is vulnerable.

For vulnerable children we will ensure we understand the reasons for vulnerability and any existing arrangements in place to support them. As a minimum, we will access that child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or, for looked after children, their personal education plan and know who the child's social worker is and the responsible Virtual Schools Head.

Ideally this will take place before the child arrives, but if this is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable.

Any exchange of information will ideally happen at DSL or deputy level and likewise between special educational needs coordinators/ named individual with oversight of SEN provision for children with EHC plans. If this is not possible, the senior leader will take responsibility.

We will continue to have due regard to data protection and GDPR legislation, but it will not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

GS April 2020