Crofty Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

Pencoys Primary and Pre- School

Approved by:	Simon Hague (CEO)	**Date:** 3/4/20
Last reviewed on:	28/5/20	

Next review due by: 5/5/20

Contents

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure and reopening due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from our 3 local safeguarding partners – the local authority, the clinical commissioning group and the chief officer of police for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

It sets out changes to our normal child protection 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 child protection 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, the safeguarding of all children at our school whether they are currently at home or in attendance here or elsewhere – continues to be our priority. The following fundamental safeguarding principles remain the same:

● 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

● The roles and responsibilities for safeguarding in our school remain in line with our Child Protection Policy. A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy is available at all times (see section 4 for details of our arrangements). Where our DSL or a deputy DSL cannot be on site, then in addition we will also ensure a senior leader from Crofty Multi Academy Trust takes responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

● 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.

All concerns will be reported using the normal process of MyConcern.

All staff to work with and support children's social workers, the local authority virtual school head for looked-after and previously looked-after children and any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners.

We aim to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site wherever possible.

If our DSL (or deputy) can't be in school, they can be contacted remotely by email and/or telephone.

If our DSL (or deputy) is unavailable, a member of the senior leadership will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site/off site. This might include updating and managing access to child protection files, liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and as required liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school.

We will keep all school staff and volunteers informed of any changes to who the DSL/DDSL/Senior leader responsible for safeguarding is and how to contact them. This information will be emailed to staff and can also be located on the school staffroom safeguarding information board.

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

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding.

The senior leader will be responsible for liaising with the off-site DSL (or deputy) to make sure the DSL can:

● 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:

● Our 3 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

Children who remain at home due to partial school closure

During this period of partial school closure, we will not be completing our usual attendance registers or following our usual procedures to follow up on non-attendance for this group of pupils.

The school will however continue to monitor the attendance of each child on the school learning platform and where a child has not been active on the platform/ or where there has been no contact with the family for 10 school days the DSL/Senior Leader will telephone the parent/carer to ensure the child is well. If contact however cannot be made a referral will be made by the DSL/Senior Leader to the LA. The school will continue to attempt to make contact until they have been instructed otherwise by the LA.

The exception to this is where the family are considered vulnerable for example, Child in Need, Child Protection Plans, Special Guardianship, Early support, EHC plans . In these cases, where there are or have been safeguarding concerns. See appendix 1 (Crofty MAT Safeguarding Procedures 2/4/20).

Children who have returned to school

Vulnerable children attendance is expected, where it is appropriate for them (that is, where there are no shielding concerns for the child or their household, and/or following a risk assessment for children with an EHC plan), so that they can gain the educational and wellbeing benefits of attending. Vulnerable children –

regardless of year group – that have not been attending in the recent period are expected to return to nursery, early years and school provision where this would now be appropriate for them to do so. The school and other relevant partners will work with and support the relevant families and pupils to return to school where attendance is appropriate. A brief summary of attendance expectations across the different groups of vulnerable children is as follows:

- for vulnerable children who have a social worker, attendance is expected unless the child/household is shielding or clinically vulnerable (see the advice set out by Public Health England on households with possible coronavirus infection and shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as clinically extremely vulnerable
- for vulnerable children who have an education health and care (EHC) plan, attendance is expected where it is determined, following risk assessment, that their needs can be as safely or more safely met in the educational environment
- for vulnerable children who are deemed otherwise vulnerable, at the schoolattendance is expected unless the child/household is shielding or clinically vulnerable (see the advice set out by Public Health England on households with possible coronavirus infection and shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as clinically extremely vulnerable

The school will continue to notify social workers where children with a social worker do not attend. We will also follow up with any parent or carer whose child has been expected to attend and doesn't. To support the this we will take the opportunity when communicating with parents and carers to confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

For those pupils not defined as 'vulnerable' normal attendance procedures will be followed in line with the school's attendance policy however during the partial closure parents and carers will not be penalised if their child does not attend educational provision. Normal safeguarding practices, as defined within the school's safeguarding policy will be followed.

> We are using the Department for Education's daily online attendance form to keep an accurate record of who is attending school.

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.

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 and follow Crofty MAT's Whistleblowing policy which can be located on the school website.

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 we have 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. For example, children who have previously had a social worker, or who haven't met the threshold for a referral but where staff have raised concerns.

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

- They won't be attending school as the parent/carer feels anxious about sending their child to school due to Covid 19.

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 as necessary and in agreement with social care.

If we can't make contact, we will contact and inform the allocated social worker (if they are unavailable we will contact the duty social worker, then MARU or the police to ask for a welfare visit to be undertaken).

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.

11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing Staff and Volunteer Code of Conduct Policy and Acceptable Use Policy.

All online communication between pupils and staff/volunteers will be carried out only through the use of school means of communication e.g. school learning platforms. Personal emails or social media accounts may not be used to communicate in any way with pupils.

Staff will 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.

Children who are being asked to work online have very clear reporting routes in place so they can raise any concerns whilst online. As well as reporting routes back to the school the school has also signposted children to age appropriate practical support from the likes of:

- Childline - for support
- UK Safer Internet Centre - to report and remove harmful online content
- CEOP - for advice on making a report about online abuse

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 know that parents and carers may choose to supplement the school online offer with support from online companies and in some cases individual tutors. We therefore emphasise the importance of securing online support from a reputable organisation/individual who can provide evidence that they are safe and can be trusted to have access to children.

Support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online includes:

- Thinkuknow provides advice from the National Crime Agency (NCA) on staying safe online
- Parent info is a collaboration between Parentzone and the NCA providing support and guidance for parents from leading experts and organisations
- Childnet offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, to set boundaries around online behaviour and technology use, and to find out where to get more help and support
- Internet Matters provides age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls on a range of devices, and a host of practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world
- London Grid for Learning has support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online, including tips to keep primary aged children safe online
- Net-aware has support for parents and carers from the NSPCC and O2, including a guide to social networks, apps and games
- Let's Talk About It has advice for parents and carers to keep children safe from online radicalisation
- UK Safer Internet Centre has tips, advice, guides and other resources to help keep children safe online,
- including parental controls offered by home internet providers and safety tools on social networks and other online services

The government has also provided:support for parents and carers to keep children safe from online harms, includes advice about specific harms such as online child sexual abuse, sexting, and cyberbullying

- support to stay safe online includes security and privacy settings, blocking unsuitable content, and parental controls

12. Mental health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils by:

- Ensuring all pupils remaining at home have the option to contact a trusted member of staff via the school learning platform.

- Ensuring all pupils within school have the option to contact a trusted member of staff within school via the school learning platform.

- Contact information for Childline displayed on all school learning platforms and within school bubbles.

- Where possible members of the school pastoral staff maintaining links/communication with children they have worked with/are currently working with in relation to mental health support and guidance.

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.

Staff have received training to support returning pupils and know that negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of children and their parents. Where we have children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, staff will ensure appropriate support is in place for them and a programme of lessons to support pupils' mental health have been planned and will be delivered over the first few weeks of pupils returning.

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 staff 'on loan' working in our school, and seek assurance from the 'loaning' school that staff have had the appropriate checks. These checks will be undertaken by Crofty MAT School Improvement Officer.

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
- Location of safeguarding board within the setting and key information
- Confirmation of DSL arrangements

13.4 Keeping records of who's on site

We will keep a record of which staff and volunteers are on site each day, and that appropriate checks have been carried out for them. Only staff and volunteers entered on Crofty MAT schools' single central records will be used.

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, deputy or SENCO can't share this information, the senior leader(s) 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 the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 3-4 weeks by Nicola Furnish (MAT Safeguarding Lead) At every review, it will be approved by the MAT School Improvement Officer and Chief Executive Officer.

16. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection policy
- Staff Volunteer code of conduct
- Acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Peer on Peer Abuse Policy

- Anti-bullying Policy
- School Behaviour Policy

Appendix 1.

Crofty Safeguarding Procedures for pupils remaining at home (2/4/20 and updated 28/5/20)

As a minimum ensure the following is carried out to enable all schools to keep track of the children remaining at home in relation to safeguarding:

Children on Child Protection Plans

DSL to be in touch with these families every other day Monday – Friday. If possible try and talk to the children e.g. 'we are missing him/her, I would really value being able to say a little hello'.

If you can't talk to the child(ren) then listen to the background noise. Can you hear the child(ren)?

Log all calls made and the outcomes of calls. This should be recorded on MyConcern/Cpoms.

On the day you call, if you cannot make contact email/phone the allocated social worker and inform them. If you get no reply from the social worker within 24hrs call children's social care and inform the duty social

worker of the situation, if there is no duty social worker call MARU or the police for a welfare visit to be made.

Children on Child in Need Plans

DSL to be in touch with these families every week Monday – Friday. If possible try and talk to the child(ren) e.g. 'We are missing him/her, I would really value being able to say a little hello'.

If you can't talk to the child(ren) then listen to the background noise. Can you hear the children?

You need to be logging all calls made and outcomes of calls. This should be recorded on MyConcern/Cpoms.

If you cannot make contact within the week email/phone the allocated family support worker and inform them. If you get no reply within 24hrs call children's social care and inform the duty social worker of the situation if there is no duty social worker call MARU or the police for a welfare visit to be made.

Families where there are other Safeguarding Concerns/Vulnerabilities

DSL to be in touch with these families every week Monday – Friday. If possible try and talk to the children e.g. 'We are missing him, I would really value being able to say a little hello'.

If you can't talk to the children then listen to the background noise. Can you hear the children?

You need to be logging all calls made and outcomes of calls. This should be recorded on MyConcern/Cpoms.

If you cannot make contact within 10 days week report them as a CME.

All Other Children

We have a responsibly to ensure that there has been some contact with every child every ten days. This could be online learning contact from your staff. Ask your staff to inform the DSL at the end of every other week any children that they have had no contact from.

The DSL/pastoral team will then phone the child's parent to ensure they are okay. If they still have no contact then the DSL needs to report this to the LA.

If you feel a child is at immediate risk of harm or need advice call MARU 03001231116 out of hours 012082151300