

Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

The Laurels Primary School



Approved by:

Charlotte Bull

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Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)/Headteacher	Charlotte Bull	head@laurelsprimary.co.uk
Deputy DSLs	Helen Pinney Beth Collins	hpinney@laurelsprimary.co.uk bcollins@laurelsprimary.co.uk
Designated teacher for CLA	Helen Pinney	hpinney@laurelsprimary.co.uk
Designated member of senior leadership team if DSL (and deputy DSLs) can't be on site	Tom Edwards	tedwards@laurelsprimary.co.uk
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Miriam Williams Donna Tomlinson	LADO@westsussex.gov.uk 0330 222 6450
Chair of governors	Kerry Jones	kjones@laurelsprimary.co.uk
Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub	01403 229900	MASH@westsussex.gov.uk

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies from the start of the Spring term 2021. It reflects advice from our 3 local safeguarding partners (West Sussex Police, West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership, NHS West Sussex CCG) and local authority (LA) West Sussex County Council.

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of coronavirus, and should be read in conjunction with that policy. Unless covered here, our normal child protection policy continues to apply.

This addendum is subject to change, in response to any new or updated guidance the government may publish. We will keep it under review as set out in section 15 below.

In this addendum, where we refer to measures to protect pupils who are at home, this means those who are learning at home for reasons to do with coronavirus – for example, due to clinical and/or public health advice, such as if there's a local lockdown or if they need to self-isolate.

In this addendum, the [government guidance](#) identifies vulnerable children as 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

2. Core safeguarding principles

We will follow the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (2020).

We will always have regard for these important safeguarding principles:

- › The best interests of children must come first
- › If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should act on it immediately
- › A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy should be available at all times (see section 4 for details of our arrangements)
- › 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. They should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding Policy, this includes

making a report via CPOMS and notifying a DSL, which can be done remotely. It is still vitally important to do this, both for children at school and those at home.

- As a reminder, all staff should continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.
- If a concern is raised out of hours, the staff member should report the concern on CPOMS and alert the Designated Safeguarding Lead using the contacts outlined in the school safeguarding policy. If a response is not received, you must continue to exhaust all contacts before contacting MASH.
- In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Leads or contact them by phone. This will ensure that the concern is received.
- Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements

We aim to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site wherever possible. Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

If our DSL (or deputy) can't be on site, they can be contacted remotely by email, Google Meet or mobile.

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site. This will be Tom Edwards, KS2 leader.

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

- › Identify the most vulnerable children in school
- › 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, with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children, and with any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners, to help keep children safe. The designated teacher for looked-after children is Helen Pinney.

The police make contact via [Operation Encompass](#) using dsl@laurelsprimary.co.uk if they attend domestic abuse incidents so we can offer support.

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

We will resume taking our attendance register. We will also follow [guidance](#) from the Department for Education on how to record attendance and what data to submit.

- In mainstream schools, all pupils who are not expected to be in school should be recorded as 'code X'.
- Children for whom on-site provision is being provided should be recorded in line with the normal school attendance requirements.
- All children deemed clinically extremely vulnerable are advised not to attend school.

- The Laurels Primary and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – The Laurels Primary will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not.
- The Laurels Primary will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care 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, The Laurels Primary 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 Laurels Primary will notify their social worker.

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 – about both children attending school and those at home.

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.

8. Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher or volunteer

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

- Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concern to the headteacher immediately whether those concerns are working on site or remotely.
- If there is a requirement to make a notification to the headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally over the phone and followed up with an email to the head teacher to confirm the discussion.
- Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors.
- The Multi-Academy Trust will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

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. Contact plans

We have contact plans for children with a social worker, and other children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where the child is at home.

Each child has an individual plan, which sets out:

- › How often the school will make contact – this will be at least once a week
- › Which staff member(s) will make contact – as far as possible, this will be staff who know the family well
- › How staff will make contact – this will be over the phone, doorstep visits, or a combination of both

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them half termly.

If we can't make contact, we will contact children's social care or arrange a welfare check.

10. 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 line with the procedures set out in section 3 above

10.1 Children returning to school

The DSL (or deputy) will do all they reasonably can to find out from parents and carers whether there have been any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing that they should be aware of before children return.

They will also liaise with the school nurse(s) to gather relevant information about any support provided by school nursing services while children have not been in school.

The DSL (and deputy) will be given time to support staff and children regarding new concerns (and referrals as appropriate) as children return to school.

Staff and volunteers will be alert to any new safeguarding concerns as they see pupils in person.

10.2 Children at home

The school will maintain contact with children who are at home. Staff will try to speak directly to children at home to help identify any concerns. They will use school phones and devices or, if necessary they will use personal phones but they will withhold their personal number.

Staff and volunteers will look out for signs like:

- › Not completing assigned work or logging on to school systems
- › No contact from children or families
- › Seeming more withdrawn during any class check-ins or video calls

11. Online safety

11.1 In school

The Laurels Primary will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system.

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

11.2 Outside 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 Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the MAT code of conduct.

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

Below are some things to consider in virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- 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. This also applies to 1:1 sessions, so that footage can be reviewed if necessary.
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background. (Protocols will be shared with parents).
- Staff must only use platforms specified by senior managers and approved by our IT network manager / provider to communicate with pupils
- The length, time, date and attendance of any sessions is tracked by the recordings.

We will make sure children know how to report any concerns they have back to our school, and signpost them to other sources of support too. A wellbeing classroom is available for children to share worries online.

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, where relevant, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school
- › Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

12. Mental health

12.1 Children returning to school

Staff and volunteers will be aware of the possible effects that this period may have had on pupils' mental health. They will look out for behavioural signs, including pupils being fearful, withdrawn, aggressive, oppositional or excessively clingy, to help identify where support may be needed.

12.2 Children at home

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

We will also signpost all pupils, parents/carers 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 and volunteers will be alert to mental health concerns in children who are at home, and act on these immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in section 3 of this addendum

13. Staff and volunteer recruitment

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that staff 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 (2020) (KCSIE).

When carrying out DBS checks and right to work checks, we will follow the latest guidance from the DBS, Home Office and Immigration Enforcement as appropriate (for example, with regards to the process for verifying documents). We will inform candidates about the intended process as soon as reasonably practicable.

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 183-188 of Keeping Children Safe in Education. The Laurels Primary will continue to follow the

legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Full details can be found at paragraph 163 of KCSIE.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our school, we will take into account DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic and will accept portability as long as the current employer confirms in writing that: -

- the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check
- there are no known concerns about the individual's suitability to work with children
- there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

Where The Laurels Primary are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

The Laurels Primary will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 of KCSIE and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct advice for making a referral.

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the pandemic, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity.

As such, The Laurels Primary will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

14. 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 in line with the expectations of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

15. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or Department for Education is updated. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

16. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection policy
- Staff Code of conduct and Confidential Reporting Policy
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy