

Safeguarding Policy Addendum: Covid-19

This policy was created and ratified by the Wensum Trust Board:	25th June 2020
The policy owner is:	CEO
This policy will be reviewed by the Wensum Trust Board: (unless earlier review is recommended by the Wensum Trust)	Sept 2020
Policy Version:	V1.1
Signed by the Chair of the Board of Trustees:	

Associated Documentation

Keeping Children Safe in Education (*September 2019*)

DFE guidance Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on vulnerable children and young people (*originally published March 2020*)

Safer Working Practices

Related Policies

- Safeguarding Policy
- E-safety Policy
- Acceptable use of ICT
- Staff Code of Conduct

COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Firside Junior School

This addendum to the academy's Safeguarding Policy was created in response to Covid-19. It will be kept under review as circumstances continue to evolve in line with national and local guidance and should be read in conjunction with the full policy document.

This addendum to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy contains additional information about our safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

- 5.1 Context
- 5.2 Key Contact Information
- 5.3 Vulnerable children
- 5.4 Attendance monitoring
- 5.5 Designated Safeguarding Lead
- 5.6 Reporting a concern
- 5.7 Staff Safeguarding Training and induction
- 5.8 Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff
- 5.9 Children Moving Schools
- 5.10 Online safety
- 5.11 Mental Health

5.1 Context

From 20th March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for our academies to remain open to provide care for a limited number of children; children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

From 1st June 2020 the DfE's expectation is for schools to begin welcoming back more children from nominated year groups. Whilst the ages and number of children returning will vary from institution to institution, the safeguarding principles to protect those children from harm and abuse will remain the same.

It is crucial that all staff and volunteers understand the continued importance of acting immediately on any safeguarding concerns that arise. The key principles of our approach to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at our academy remain the same. This guidance has been developed to give clear direction to staff, volunteers, visitors and parents about our safeguarding procedures in light of the current national and local situation. **This addendum should be read in conjunction with the whole school safeguarding policy and not as a standalone document. Unless otherwise stated within this guidance, our normal safeguarding procedures should be adhered to.**

5.2 Key Contact Information:

Role	Name	Contact details incl. those when working remotely:
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Roz Robinson	head@firside.norfolk.sch.uk 01603 426550
Deputy DSL	Steve Keer Jacqui Harris	senco@firside.norfolk.sch.uk 01603 426550 jharris7qrq@nsix.org.uk 01603 426550
Nominated Senior Leader in the absence of a trained DSL	Lucy Seagrave	lseagrave9nrz@nsix.org.uk 01603 426550
Headteacher/Principal	Roz Robinson	head@firside.norfolk.sch.uk 01603 426550
Named Safeguarding Governor	Louise Watts	c/o office@firside.norfolk.sch.uk
Chair of Governors	Edwin Pearson	chairofgov@firside.norfolk.sch.uk

5.3 Providing School places for Vulnerable Children

For the purposes of this guidance, vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with EHC plans, in line with the [DfE guidance](#).

At Firside Junior School we will risk assess the needs of all pupils with an EHC plan in consultation with the Local Authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a place in our academy in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. In line with Government guidance, we appreciate that many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

At Firside Junior School our Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and other Senior Leaders will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers and the local authority Virtual School Head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

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 increased risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and academy staff will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent. Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19,

academy staff and/or the child's allocated social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Our DSLs know who our most vulnerable children are. As an academy, we have the flexibility to offer a place to other pupils we identify as being vulnerable who may be on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

5.4 Attendance monitoring

In line with the DfE guidance, '[Recording the attendance in the school attendance register during the coronavirus outbreak](#)', we will resume taking an attendance register using the appropriate codes to [record attendance and absence](#) in the attendance register. We will submit daily attendance figures to the DfE using the [educational setting status form](#) by midday every day.

At Firside Junior School our DSLs will liaise with allocated social workers and will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending the academy. Academy staff will then follow up on any pupil that we were expecting to attend, who does not in line with our usual attendance procedures. We 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.

In the event that a child does not attend school, and is expected to attend, the following procedure will be followed;

- The office staff will confirm that the parent/carer has called and left a message on the absence voice mail.
- The office staff will call all absent pupils where there has been no voice mail message received.
- The Head of Year will call and email the parents of an absent pupil whose parent/carer does not respond to the office staff.
- The DSL and Deputy DSL will carry out a home visit for all absent pupils whose parent/carer has not responded to the Head of Year.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at the academy, or fails to attend as expected, academy staff will notify the child's allocated social worker and agree a plan to contact the family.

To enable us to effectively support the attendance of vulnerable children, we will ask parents/carers to confirm that emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

5.5 The Designated Safeguarding Lead

We have identified key designated contacts for safeguarding at our academy in section 4.2. of this guidance.

At Firside Junior School we aim to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site whenever possible. We recognise however that this may not be possible, and where

this is the case, we will endeavour to ensure that a trained DSL or deputy from the academy can be available to be contacted via phone or online when they are working remotely from home. In some circumstances we might also work with other settings to share trained DSLs or deputies with other academies in the trust or schools within the cluster (who should be available to be contacted via phone or online video).

Where a trained DSL or deputy is not on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding arrangements in place on-site. This might include updating and managing access to child protection/ our online safeguarding management information system, liaising with the off-site DSL (and/or deputy) and, as necessary, liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the educational setting.

We will ensure that all staff and volunteers know how to contact and have access to advice from a trained DSL (or deputy). Each day, staff will be made aware of who that person is and how to contact them.

We will continue to work in partnership with children, parents and other agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Our DSLs will keep up to date with the latest [Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership advice](#) and guidance from the [LA](#). Our DSLs will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely in line with the NSCP guidance on attending and contributing to [child protection conferences](#) and [Developing Child Protection Plans](#).

In line with the Department for Education guidance, for the period COVID-19 measures are in place, a DSL (or deputy) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputy) even if they miss their refresher training.

All DSLs can seek advice regarding any situation from the Strategic Leads (Primary and Secondary) who are the Trust's Designated Safeguarding Managers.

5.6 Procedures for Reporting Concerns

The principles for responding to safeguarding concerns as outlined in Section 5 of the main body of the safeguarding policy still apply. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child and have a responsibility to take action as outline in this policy.

As more children return to school from 1 June staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay in line with our usual procedures. This will include identifying new safeguarding concerns about individual children as they see them in person following partial school closures. We will also continue to support pupils who are not attending or expected to attend and consider the vulnerability of these children and families.

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk including at risk from peer on peer abuse and exploitation. 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.

Staff should continue to report concerns using the usual procedures, by recording all information on CPOMS. In the event that CPOMS is unavailable then they should call either the DSL or Deputy DSL. All staff have been supplied with the mobile number and landline number of the DSL's.

Staff are also reminded of the need to adhere to our Staff Code of Conduct and safer working practice [guidance](#). Staff should continue to report any concerns they have about adults who are working with children in line with Section 12 of the safeguarding policy.

5.7 Staff Training and induction

All existing staff and volunteers have received a safeguarding induction and training. They have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) and are expected to continue to follow this guidance. The DSL will ensure that all existing staff receive this addendum to the safeguarding policy and will communicate 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 join our academy, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction as outlined in Section 4 of the main policy.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to work in our academy, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic. This means that on arrival to our academy, we will verify that they have received safeguarding training and they will be given a copy of our safeguarding policy and information about our procedures including information about our DSL arrangements.

5.8 Safer recruitment of staff & volunteers and movement of staff

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 continue to follow our safer recruitment and selection policy, the procedures outlined in Section 10 of the safeguarding policy and Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019).

In those circumstances where we continue to use volunteers in our school, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment processes as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE and our own safer recruitment and selection policy. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to work in our academy, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic. This means that we will risk assess the movement of staff and seek written assurances from the current employer that the individual has undergone all the safer recruitment required checks as set out in Part 3 of KCSIE and there are no concerns about their suitability to work with children.

At Firside Junior School we 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 in accordance with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2019). We will also continue to make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) in line with statutory guidance and understand that during the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk.

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current environment, Firside Junior School we understand that it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that, on any given day, we are aware of which staff/volunteers will be in the school, and that appropriate checks have been carried out. We will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date and use this as a means to log everyone that will be working or volunteering in our academy on any given day, including any staff who may be on loan from other institutions. The SCR will also be used to log details of any risk assessments carried out on volunteers and staff on loan from elsewhere.

5.9 Children moving between settings

In some circumstances our pupils may need to attend another setting. In order to support children attending another setting during this time, the DSL will endeavour to contact the DSL at the receiving setting to provide any relevant welfare and child protection information including any arrangements in place to support them. We will continue to pay regard to data protection and GDPR but these do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

As a minimum, we will ensure that the receiving setting has access to a vulnerable 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 (and, for looked-after children, who the responsible VSH is). This will ideally happen before a child arrives and, where that is not possible as soon as reasonably practicable. Where it is not possible for this exchange of information to occur between DSLs the identified senior leaders will take responsibility for this.

5.10 Online Safety

At Firside Junior School we recognise that it is more important than ever that we provide a safe environment for pupils including online. We will continue to ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect children when they are online via our IT systems and/or recommended resources.

The safety of pupils when they are asked to work online is of paramount importance. The same principles as set out our staff code of conduct must be applied to all online teaching. All staff should ensure that they have read the staff code of conduct and associated [safer working practice guidance](#) and DfE guidance '[Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)' and are clear about the acceptable use of technologies, staff pupil/student relationships and communication including the use of social media.

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

We will ensure that 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 to key school staff, we will also signpost children to age appropriate practical support from external organisations such as:

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

We will also communicate with parents to reinforce the importance of children being safe online. We will ensure that parents and carers are aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access as well as who from the academy (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.

Where parents and carers choose to supplement the academy's online offer with support from online companies and in some cases individual tutors, we will 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.

We will signpost parents and carers to advice what will help them keep their children safe online including:

- [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.

5.11 Mental Health

At Firside Junior School we recognise that negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of children and their parents. As more children return to school, we will ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

We will ensure that staff understand that mental health issues can bring about changes in a child's behaviour or emotional state which can be displayed in a range of different ways, all of which could be an indication of an underlying problem. DSLs will make reference to the DfE guidance [Mental health and behaviour in schools](#) to help identify children who might need additional support, and to put this support in place.

Review of Policy

The Trust will review this policy every 3 years and assess its effectiveness and implementation. Any deficiencies identified shall be corrected and used to inform review of the policy, which will be promoted and implemented throughout the Trust.

The Chief Executive Officer will report on the effectiveness of the policy to the Trust Board as appropriate.