

Annex to Child Protection Policy (Covid-19/Spring Term 2021)

Following the outbreak of Covid-19 and the Government's response to manage the pandemic The Link School is operating differently to how we normally deliver education and support to our pupils and their families. Many pupils are at home and we have a reduction in the amount of staff available. Despite this, **the safety and wellbeing of all our pupils remains paramount.**

The Link School continues to follow [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/keeping-children-safe-in-education) (www.gov.uk)

Current advice from Together for Children (TfC)

TfC is in regular communication with schools and will continue to provide support and advice as necessary. This policy will be updated by the Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead to reflect the advice given by TfC and the 3 safeguarding partners.

Key messages from TfC [correct as of 04/01/2021]:

- It is 'business as usual' for our Children's Social Care Teams and Early Help Service. Social Workers and Early Help Workers are continuing to visit children and families within timescales.
- Social Workers and Early Help Workers have risk assessed each child and family to ensure they receive the appropriate level of support in these challenging times.
- **All concerns (even if the child is already open to a Social Worker) should be shared via ICRT and followed up with a written referral.** Contacts and referrals received in this way will be triaged by ICRT and sent to the appropriate Social Worker and team.
- Do not assume Social Workers are at work and/or have access to their emails. If you need to contact a Social Worker you should call them directly or the respective duty number.
- The process for contacting the Designated Officer (Danielle Rose) have not changed.
- Thresholds and how to refer to Early Help and Children's Social Care **have not changed.** DSLs should continue to use [Sunderland Threshold Guidance](#).

The current school position

During a period of national lockdown, schools, alternative provision, special schools, and colleges will remain open to [vulnerable children and young people](#) and the children of [critical workers](#) only. All other children and students will learn remotely.

The Link School and the assessment hubs at Hudson Road and Oxclose open and able to provide face to face learning for those pupils who fall into this category. For those children who are not attending face to face sessions in school, live lessons (see remote learning policy) are being provided on a daily basis, supplemented by home learning packs and independent study through Century Learning.

Vulnerable children and young people include 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

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) arrangements

The Designated Safeguarding Leads are:

- Wendy Ellison: Safeguarding advisor. Mobile number 07917263414 or 0191 5615777. Email: wendy.ellison@schools.sunderland.gov.uk
- Donna Walker: Head Teacher. 0191 5615777 or 0191 5614777. Email: donna.walker@schools.sunderland.gov.uk
- Dave Bromby - Head of School Springwell Dene. 0191 5615777 Email: dave.bromby@schools.sunderland.gov.uk
- Rob Giles - Head of Pallion. 0191 5614777. Email: robert.giles@schools.sunderland.gov.uk

Designated Deputies

- Sarah Davison – KS2 Assistant Head Teacher. 0191 5615777 Email: sarah.davison@schools.sunderland.gov.uk
- Leanne Clark – Primary SENDCo. 0191 561577. Email: Leanne.clark@schools.sunderland.gov.uk
- Vicki Mitchell – KS2 Hub Lead Teacher. 0191 5615777. Email: vicki.mitchell@schools.sunderland.gov.uk
- Victoria Knight – KS3 Hub Lead Teacher. 0191 4195120 . Email: victoria.knight@schools.sunderland.gov.uk.
- Lisa Watson – Behaviour Support Advisor. 0191 561577. Email: lisa.watson@schools.sunderland.gov.uk
- Rachel Darling – Re-integration Officer. 0191 4195120. Email: rachel.darling@schools.sunderland.gov.uk.

Assistant Safeguarding Leads:

- Lorraine Oliver – KS4 HLTA Behaviour Lead. 0191 561477. Email: lorraine.oliver@schools.sunderland.gov.uk
 - Claire Telford-Peake – KS3 TA. 0191 561577. Email: Claire.telford-peake@schools.sunderland.gov.uk
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- Following DfE guidance, we ensure there is a DSL always available when the school is open, preferably on-site.
 - If a DSL is not on-site, a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will take responsibility for safeguarding. A trained DSL will also be available on-call.
 - A member of the SLT will email all staff by 9am each morning to advise of the arrangements to contact the DSL.

Reporting concerns

- Staff and volunteers will continue to follow the school's Child Protection Policy.
- As the link school is open, that are no changes to the normal Child Protection Policy – staff will raise concerns identified during remote learning lessons as per the normal procedures as DSL's are onsite all times. If follow up actions are requires, DSLs may complete home visits as appropriate.
- Staff and volunteers will report any safeguarding concerns to a DSL as described in the paragraph above.
- If a DSL is not available, any staff or volunteer who has a concern about a child's welfare should made a referral to TfC – Integrated Contact and Referral Team (ICRT) on 0191 520 5560.

Identifying and supporting vulnerable pupils

Following advice from TfC we have risk assessed all pupils using a Red, Amber, Blue, Green system.

Category and priority	Suggested children	Describe who is responsible for making contact for pupils within this group, how often they are required to make contact etc.
Red – pupils most at risk with few protective factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils on child protection plans • Pupils on child in need plans • Pupils open to early help • Pupils open to Youth Offending Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full time in school face to face sessions offered. • All pupils are contacted daily through live learning by teaching staff. • For those learners who do not engage, the allocated Teaching assistants makes contact with home during the live lesson to discuss pupil absence. • Home visit made on Day 3 (as per attendance policy). • Information shared with Wendy Ellison, DSL who will share information with appropriate professionals. • Texts sent out regarding absence/non engagement daily. • Weekly welfare calls to parents/carers. • Wendy Ellison/Sylvia Wardle have responsibility for these RAG rated pupils.
Amber – pupils at moderate risk with some protective factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children in care • Young carers • You may want to include some pupils on the ‘edge’ of children’s social care intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full time in school face to face sessions offered. • All pupils are contacted daily through live learning by teaching staff. • For those learners who do not engage, the allocated Teaching assistants makes contact with home

		<p>during the live lesson to discuss pupil absence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home visit made on Day 3 (as per attendance policy). • Information shared with Wendy Ellison, DSL who will share information with appropriate professionals. • Texts sent out regarding absence/non engagement daily. • Weekly welfare calls to parents/carers
Blue – pupils who you have some concerns about	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils on the ‘edge’ of children’s social care intervention • Pupils with a recent Operation Encompass/Endeavour notification • Pupils who have recently closed to children’s social care/EH 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full time in school face to face sessions offered. • All pupils are contacted daily through live learning by teaching staff. • For those learners who do not engage, the allocated Teaching assistants makes contact with home during the live lesson to discuss pupil absence. • Some local arrangements have been made for work pack learning (as virtual lessons increase anxiety). • Daily welfare phonecalls to take place. • Home visit made twice weekly to check on progress • Any concerns to be shared with Wendy Ellison, DSL who will take appropriate action if needed.
Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All other pupils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full time in school face to face sessions offered. • All pupils are contacted daily through live learning by teaching staff. • For those learners who do not engage, the allocated Teaching assistants makes contact with home

		<p>during the live lesson to discuss pupil absence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home visit made on Day 3 (as per attendance policy). • Texts sent out regarding absence/non engagement daily.
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- A DSL has risk assessed each pupil who is Red, Amber or Blue and has made a record of the risk assessment on CPOMS
- A DSL will review each risk assessment half termly and record any changes to the risk assessment (unless individual circumstances changes and need a more regular risk assessment).
- If a child has a Social Worker or an Early Help Worker, a DSL will contact each professional to share the school's risk assessment and contribute to the ongoing plan to safeguard each child.
- If a child has a Social Worker or an Early Help Worker, a DSL has made all reasonable attempts to encourage the child to attend school, providing there's no significant risk to the child's health.
- Every contact with a child or family will be recorded on CPOMS.

Children Looked After (CLA)

- Our Designated Teacher's for CLA are: Leanne Clark (Primary Teacher/SENDSCO), Gaynor Proctor (Primary Teacher), Emma Robson (KS3 Teacher/SENDSCO), Clare Curry (KS4 Teacher/SENDSCO), Victoria Knight (KS3 Hub) and Vicki Mitchell (KS2 Hub)
- Our DT CLA/Safeguarding has contacted each child's Social Worker, carer, those with PR (where appropriate) and the Virtual School to discuss the plan for the child's education.
- Children looked after will not be moved schools including to "hub schools" or within the MAT without first consulting the Virtual Headteacher.
- The Virtual School link worker will, in addition to school monitoring, make safe and well calls twice per week.

Increased risk

- We recognise that there is increased pressure on families at this time. There will be additional worries about health, finance and employment.
- We are aware some families will need extra support with things like food parcels and benefits advice.
- We recognise that the current situation will affect pupils and their parent's/carer's mental health.
- Any concerns will be reported to the DSL. See DSL arrangements above.

Attendance

- We are following advice issued by DfE in relation to [attendance recording for education settings](#).
- Where a pupil who is expected to arrive does not arrive, we will try to make contact with the parent/carer by 9.15am.
- If we have been unable to contact the pupil's parent/carer or emergency contacts by 9.30am the DSL will be informed. See DSL arrangements above.
- The DSL will further attempt to make contact with the family. The DSL will also contact any other professionals involved with the pupil e.g. Social Worker.
- The DSL will undertake a risk assessment to decide on further action required.

Peer-on-Peer Abuse

- We recognise the importance of responding to peer-on-peer abuse.
- We recognise some pupils will be at greater risk of peer-on-peer abuse due to spending more time at home and online.
- Staff and volunteers will remain vigilant to the signs and indicators of peer-on-peer abuse and will report any concerns to the DSL. See DSL arrangements above.

Concerns about a member of the workforce

- **It could happen here.** Staff and volunteers should continue to report any concern, no matter how small to a DSL.
- If there is a concern about a member of staff or volunteer's behaviour, you should report it to Dave Bromby (Head of School, Springwell Dene). 0191 5615777. dave.bromby@schools.sunderland.gov.uk and Rob Giles (Head of School, Pallion) robert.giles@schools.sunderland.gov.uk. 0191 5614777.
- If the above person is not available then you should contact Donna Walker (Head Teacher) donna.walker@schools.sunderland.gov.uk. 0191 5614777 or 0191 5615777.
- If the concern is in relation to the Headteacher then you should report it to Tony Cunningham, Chair of the Management Committee. Email: cunningham.a@oxclose.net
- Allegations about the workforce should be reported to the Designated Officer (Danielle Rose) by following the procedure available here: <https://www.togetherforchildren.org.uk/professionals/LADO>

Further Guidance

Awaiting further guidance from DfE.