**The Drelincourt School**

**Addendum to Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

**Covid-19 Arrangements**

**Context**

There have been significant changes within our setting in response to the outbreak of Covid-19.

Despite the changes, the school’s Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is fundamentally the same: **children always come first, staff should respond robustly to safeguarding concerns and contact the DT in line with our established safeguarding procedures**.

The current national health concerns relating to Covid-19 creates uncertainty in the lives of children. Daily routines, family life, friendship groups and the safe space that schools provide have been disrupted. For many children, spending increased time at home will have been an additional challenge, and for some, an additional safeguarding risk factor. It is important that the adults responsible for safeguarding children are sensitive to their physical, social and emotional needs in these most unusual circumstances. It is critically important that children who are or may be at risk are identified so that a proportionate, compassionate and sensitive response can be taken.

This addendum sets out some of the adjustments we are making in line with the changed arrangements in the school and following [advice from government](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers) and local agencies.

We continue to adhere to government guidelines and keep abreast of any updated advice from the Education Authority Child Protection Support Service.

**Procedures**

The school arrangements continue in line with our child protection policy.

The Designated Teacher is: **Mrs Trew**

The Deputy Designated Teacher is:**Mrs Walker**

Staff will continue to follow Child Protection procedures and advise the safeguarding team immediately about concerns they have about any child, whether in school or not. COVID-19 means a need for increased vigilance due to the pressures on services, families and young people, rather than a reduction in our standards.

Should a child, in the school’s view be at risk of significant harm and local agencies are not able to respond, the school will take advice from the EA Child Protection Support Service.

Staff will continue to follow the procedures outlined in our school’s Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy which is available on our school website.

**Attendance**

Staff will follow our Attendance Policy and Procedures.

The DT will attempt a range of methods to contact the parents/carers of children who are absent. A risk assessment will be undertaken to manage the implications of COVID-19 alongside other risks perceived to the child.

The risk of COVID-19 **does not** **override** the duty on the school to ensure children and young people are safe.

The DT will liaise with the Education Welfare Service if contact proves impossible with children at home.

**Remote Learning**

In addition, the following arrangements have been put in place to support families and monitor pupil safety in the event of **pupils spending extended periods at home**:

* The school email address and main school phone number have been made available to all parents.
* Teachers will provide online learning via Seesaw with procedures in place to minimise risk.
* There is a remote learning policy and a parent’s guide to remote learning.

**Prolonged School Closure**

In the event of a **prolonged school closure** we have put in place specific arrangements:

* A family check-in message will be sent via the Seesaw app each Monday morning to all our vulnerable families (children with social workers, children who have been referred to Education Welfare).  More children may be added to this group in response to concerns raised with the DT.  These messages ask parents to let us know if they are managing or if they need any support. The DT will then contact any parent who has requested support and signpost them to the appropriate service e.g. school counsellor, Family Support Hub.
* A weekly check-in message will also be sent to parents of children with Special Educational Needs. Any concerns will be followed up by the SENCO.
* Regular phone calls will be made to parents/carers by the Principal, teachers and classroom/learning assistants to provide encouragement and support if necessary. Staff have been informed about signposting parents who need help to the Gateway service or the Family Support Hub.

**How a parent can raise an issue or express a concern**

We would welcome parents asking for advice and help if they have concerns about their child’s well-being or safety.

Any member of staff will listen carefully to parental concerns and ensure that the request for help, if necessary, is brought to the attention of the safeguarding team. In this case a decision can be made as to how best to provide help.

**If school is open during COVID-19 closures**

If school is open for vulnerable pupils and key worker’s children, the school will adhere to the EA guidance.

If our school is part of a cluster of schools which are open, we will share relevant safeguarding information with the Designated Teacher and/or Principal. In accordance with our Child Protection procedures this information will be shared on a need to know basis.

In any event, we will follow current Department of Education and Department of Health guidelines regarding social distancing, hygiene and personal protective equipment to ensure the safety of both pupils and staff.

**How a child can raise a concern**

We know that while many children will be enjoying their time at home during a covid-19 closure and remain almost unaffected by this unusual situation, there will be others who feel scared, lonely and even those who miss school. Our safeguarding responsibility to all our children continues and we will seek to maintain contact with our children and young people as well as signpost them to other agencies.

We will use the following means to connect with our children:

* Interaction through Seesaw

* Children will be made aware of the Childline phone number

Other Agencies

* CEOP/Thinkuknow
* Childnet
* Safer Schools App

**SOME USEFUL LINKS AND CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS:** –

Gateway 028 9050 7000 (ask for the Duty Social Worker)

* + - <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/coronavirus>
		- <https://www.camhs-resources.co.uk/>
		- <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/coronavirus/>
		- <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/helpline/report-harmful-content>
		- <https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/>

**MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The Safeguarding team will review and amend these arrangements regularly in line with Departmental guidance and advice.

Updated - January 2022