



Five Rivers Child Care Ltd

Safeguarding Policy

Appendix – Response to Covid-19

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19. 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

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, we are still following these important safeguarding principles:
- 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
- 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

In order to ensure children and young people remain safeguarded in light of the restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 outbreak, the following needs to be routinely considered:

1. Any updated advice received from the local 3 safeguarding partners.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers>

2. Any updated advice received from local authorities regarding 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.

NA - following OFSTED, Department of Education and Public Health Guidance. We have informed all appropriate LA's of our provision for vulnerable children and for those with EHCPs. We update them on a regular basis and if there are changes (including safeguarding during school holidays).

3. What staff and volunteers should do if they have any concerns about a child/young person.

Same as existing arrangements. Notify the DSL for the school straight away and follow the existing safeguarding policy.

As most children will not be attending school during this period of school closure, we will not be completing our usual attendance registers or following our usual procedures to follow up on non-attendance.

The exception to this is where any child we expect to attend school during the closure does not attend, or stops attending. In these cases we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers. Notify their social worker, where they have one

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

We will make arrangements with parents and carers to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details, and additional contact details where possible.

4. The continued importance of all staff and volunteers acting and acting immediately on any safeguarding concerns.

Same as existing arrangements and policy. Recognising additional safeguarding challenge of pupils working at home. Daily contact (phone or online) with each pupil during this period and ensure regular contact for vulnerable pupils during school holidays.

5. DSL (and deputy) arrangements:

As existing:

DSL for Five Rivers Child Care

James Hall (Head of Education)

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07935 066031

Deputy DSL for Five Rivers Child Care

Shellie Barcroft (Education Advisor to the Board)

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The Spires School

Louise Bethel (Head Teacher and DSL)

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Utibe Abasi Umoren (Head Teacher and DSL)

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Fountain House School

Matthew Palmer (Head Teacher and DSL)

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6. The continued importance for school and college staff to work with and support children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

As existing procedures.

7. Peer on peer abuse - given the very different circumstances schools and colleges are operating in a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims (the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE should continue to inform any revised approach).

As existing procedures. Contact DSL with any concerns.

8. What staff and volunteers should do if they have concerns about a staff member or volunteer who may pose a safeguarding risk to children (the principles in part 4 of KCSIE will continue to support how a school or college responds to any such concerns).

As existing procedures. Contact DSL of Five Rivers, who will follow procedures and contact LADO for advice.

9. Any arrangements to support children the school or college are concerned about who do not meet the 'vulnerable' definition.

All pupils have allocated staff who contact daily, a bespoke timetable and curriculum provision. Staff contact parents and each pupil has an updated risk assessment (linked to EHCP).

10. What arrangements are in place to keep children not physically attending the school or college safe, especially online and how concerns about these children should be progressed.

Any safety concerns should be addressed to the DSL, as per existing. All pupils have access to online learning and where needed provided equipment from the schools. Pupils are reminded and guided into safe internet use and have signed a user agreement. Work progress is monitored, and staff are in daily contact (including regular contact during holiday periods).

Online safety materials have been circulated and all staff and parents/carers reminded of the importance of staying safe online.