



THURLSTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL SAFEGUARDING POLICY

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE AND PROCEDURES RE CORONAVIRUS / COVID-19

To be followed in conjunction with Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2020/2021

Context

From 20th March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools and childcare providers to remain open only for a strictly limited number of children who absolutely need to attend - children who are vulnerable or children whose parents are key workers and are critical to the COVID-19 response and who cannot be safely cared for at home.

This addendum applies to any period of lockdown or restricted opening caused by the Covid 19 outbreak.

Guidance on key worker definition is here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

This addendum of the Thurlstone Primary School Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is particularly relevant to vulnerable children and contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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15. Support from the Local Authority

Key contacts

- Headteacher/ Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) - Mrs Charlotte Gibbins
c.gibbins@thurlstoneprimary.co.uk
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads – Miss Kate Brown (Deputy Head) and Miss Donna Collins (SENDco)
- Safeguarding Governor – Dr Sarah Field (also Chair of Governors)

Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans. The school will make regular contact with the relevant families during any period of school closure.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child Protection (CP) Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

We will ensure we are following the most up to date government and local authority guidance on vulnerable children attending school: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/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/coronavirus-covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers>

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the Local Authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home. Any concerns relating to a pupil with an EHCP will be reported to the LA SEN team to seek further support/advice.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Supporting children not in school

Thurlstone Primary School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children and young people. Where vulnerable children are not in school (children defined as vulnerable under government guidance or those identified by the school) the DSL should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person. The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits.

This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

If staff start to become worried about a child/family and feel they may need early help support, they should email earlyhelp@barnsley.gov.uk and request a call back from an early help professional who will be able to provide advice and guidance

Thurlstone Primary School will share messages regarding safeguarding and vulnerability updates via Class Dojo and via email. We will also signpost support services to children and their families around a range of issues like home learning, mental health support and financial advice; this will include signposting families to the services and support available through the family services directory: <https://fsd.barnsley.gov.uk/kb5/barnsley/fisd/home.page>

Thurlstone Primary School recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Teachers at Thurlstone Primary need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Staff and volunteers will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on pupils' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, including when interacting with pupils online, and act on concerns immediately in line with procedures detailed within safeguarding and child protection policy/this document.

Communication with all families

The Headteacher and class teachers will communicate with pupils regularly during term time via Class Dojo. Staff will monitor communication from home to school daily Monday – Friday between 9:00am and 5:00pm. Home learning plans are in place, with flexibility to support homes with/without technology/internet access (paper copies available on request). Guidance for parents/carers outlining how they can support their children to continue learning whilst at home has been shared via letters and on Class Dojo.

Supporting children in school

Thurlstone Primary School will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

Thurlstone Primary School will refer to the Government guidance for education and childcare settings on how to implement social distancing and continue to follow the advice from Public Health England on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID19. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementingsocial-distancing-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancingand-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-andprotecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

Where the school has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our DSL or first aiders – they will discuss them immediately with the Local Authority. Thurlstone Primary School will continue to work with and support social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked after and previously looked-after children. The lead person for this will be the School Designated Lead for Looked After Children (LAC) – Charlotte Gibbins.

For many vulnerable children, school represents a safe haven from risk and therefore wherever possible parents and carers of vulnerable children will be encouraged to send them to school unless, on the balance of assessed risk, it is demonstrably safer for them to be at home; or there are other extenuating family circumstances (to be considered in conjunction with social worker). Consideration/ assessment will be done on a case by case basis. The longer the crisis continues, the more critical it will potentially become that more of our vulnerable children are in school. Therefore we will review with parents/carers regularly any decisions not to send vulnerable pupils into school.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, school leaders or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Supporting LAC pupils

School designated teacher provision for Children & Young People in the Care of Barnsley

- Welfare Call will continue to monitor attendance of children looked after
- Phone contact at least once a week.
- Offer of support as appropriate through the setting, school or college and social worker.
- Liaising with all necessary professionals as usual (e.g. Education setting, Virtual School, social worker, Personal Advisor, IRO & health professionals)
- Attending any planned review meetings (inc. virtually), unless advised otherwise
- Identified staff to record all interactions and any additional concerns via their usual recording mechanism and share or escalate if necessary
- Each young person's TPEP kept up to date including information about changes to educational provision in light of the current situation.
- It is important to note that looked after children currently not accessing education at school may need to return to school based learning to ensure they can continue to be supported in their placement. This should form part of the risk assessment for all looked after children and school should maintain regular contact with social workers to monitor the impact of any decisions regarding school access.
- If support is required contact the Barnsley Virtual School Team via virtualschool@barnsley.gov.uk

School designated teacher provision for Children & Young People in the Care of Local Authorities other than Barnsley

- As above but schools should confirm the arrangements for monitoring attendance with the placing authority
- If support is required contact the appropriate teams in the Local Authority responsible for the care of the young person. If experiencing any difficulties contact the Barnsley Virtual School via contact details above.

Attendance monitoring

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance.

Thurlstone Primary School will complete and upload the requested attendance data to the DFE portal and to the Local Authority via Perspective Lite. Thurlstone Primary School and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether Children in Need should be attending school – the school will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who do not. The school 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.

To support the above, school leaders 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, school leaders will notify their social worker.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Every effort will be made to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site at all times. Where this is not the case a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example when working from home.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, the class teacher allocated to in school provision that day will assume responsibility for coordinating safeguarding on site. This might include updating and managing access to safeguarding files and liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and, as required, liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school or college.

It is important that all leaders, staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day staff on site will be made aware of that person is and how to speak to them.

During the period of partial/ full school closure, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Charlotte Gibbins, will be responsible for monitoring vulnerable pupils. All staff are aware of this and able to contact by telephone or email if required. This will support all staff in sharing any information from their contact with children or families.

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

All relevant staff have been provided with contact details for advice/ support/ referrals:

- Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership for advice: 01226 775859
- Early Help support: earlyhelp@barnsley.gov.uk
- Barnsley Schools Alliance: admin-schoolsalliance@barnsley.gov.uk
- Children's Social Care front door – urgent referrals only: 01226 772423
- Looked After Children - virtualschool@barnsley.gov.uk
- Education Welfare Service – janeallen@barnsley.gov.uk
- Education, Health & Care Plan Team – EHCTeam@barnsley.gov.uk
- Special Educational Needs / Disability Information, Advice & Support Service SENDIASS@barnsley.gov.uk or phone: 01226 787 234
- Department for Education coronavirus helpline is available to answer questions about COVID-19 relating to education and children's social care. Phone: 0800 046 8687

Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the Thurlstone Primary School Safeguarding Policy, this includes logging a cause for concern on CPOMS.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay, whatever the circumstances.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should refer to the school's 'Staff Code of Conduct' and 'Whistleblowing' policies.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors, Dr Sarah Field
s.field@thurlstoneprimary.co.uk

The Local Authority will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

Safeguarding Training and induction

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID 19 virus.

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 existing school staff have had basic safeguarding training and have received and read Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) (KCSiE). The DSL should communicate with staff 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 enter a school they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction within usual school induction procedures.

If staff are deployed from another education establishment or children's workforce setting to our school, we will take into account the 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

For movement within the cluster of local schools, or the wider LA, we will seek assurance from the host school that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training.

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the receiving setting's Child Protection Policy, any other relevant policies and confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

Safer recruitment/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, the school will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting. In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking to minimise the need for face-to-face contact. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Thurlstone Primary School 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.

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current National emergency, 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, schools will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date.

Online safety in school

Thurlstone Primary School 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.

Children and online safety away from 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 school's ESafety Policy and other relevant policies and codes of conduct. Teachers at Thurlstone Primary School will not make regular use of video calls, but when used identity checks will be made before allowing participants to join. Thurlstone Primary School 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 when delivering video conferencing, especially where webcams are involved:

- Staff must only use platforms agreed by the school to communicate with pupils, and it is the responsibility of the teachers to gatekeep and check content and comments.
- 1:1 video conferencing is strictly prohibited – in no circumstances should staff make or take video calls with pupils. If video conferencing is to be used to support vulnerable pupils, 2 staff should be present at all times
- Suitable clothing should be worn by anyone in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred where ever possible
- If live classes are used they should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

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, 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

Peer on Peer Abuse

Thurlstone Primary School recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims. Where a school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in KSCiE and of those outlined within the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Thurlstone Primary 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 following usual safeguarding procedures and appropriate referrals made.

Support from the Local Authority

The LA will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL and/or school leaders to carry out their role effectively. This includes regular updates on guidance from central or local Government, access to supporting services and signposting new departments to support the COVID-19 response.

The LA will also provide regular cluster lead, group and/or individual supervision support. This may take the form of an online meeting or emailed documentation.

