

COVID-19

Addendum to Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in advance of the re-opening of the Skylark Federation schools from 1/6/20

The Skylark Federation Schools already have a Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (September 2019) and an addendum to reflect the school's response to coronavirus. This addendum supports the planned return of more children from Monday 1st June 2020.

Concerning Children

Staff may identify new safeguarding concerns about individual children as they see them in person following partial school closures. Concerns need to be recorded promptly and effectively using the schools' paper-based or electronic recording systems. Staff returning to school who have not been on site since March and need to renew best practice in recording welfare concerns, need to speak with a member of the DSL team who will be able to support them. The DSL team anticipate the number of concerns being recorded will continue to escalate throughout the phasing period; as more children return, there will be more concerns to consider.

It is important the relevant safeguarding and welfare information held on all children (including returning children) remains accurate. Staff should be doing all they reasonably can to ask parents and carers to advise them of any changes regarding welfare, health and well-being that they should be aware of before a child returns.

DSL/DDSL Arrangements

From 1/6/20 every member of the federation's DSL/DDSL team will be available on site.

Peer on Peer Abuse

The schools will continue to manage any report of peer on peer abuse and support victims using the principles set out in KCSiE 2019 (Part 5). The phased return of pupils will mean operating in different circumstances (different hub groupings to enable social distancing, for example) and a revised process may be necessary for managed any identified peer on peer abuse.

Updating Staff

Staff on site will be reminded via regular daily/weekly briefings about what they should do if they have any concerns about a staff member or volunteer who may pose a risk to children. The Skylark Federation's approach to protecting all of its children (including vulnerable pupils) remains vigilant.

Non-attending children

Children in Years 2-5 will not, initially, be attending school from 1/6/20 (unless they are Key Workers' children). Children in Years R, 1 and 6 may not attend if their parents chose not to send them in. See the Lockdown Addendum to each school's Safeguarding and CP Policy regarding protecting these children. Online safety will continue to be a focus.

Advice

The schools will continue to respond to safeguarding advice received from the Government and the Local Authority; update advice will continue to lead the schools' local arrangements. Any updated advice received from the LA regarding children with EHC plans and LAC pupils will be followed robustly.

Attendance

Vulnerable children attendance remains expected where it is appropriate for them (that is, where there are no shielding concerns for the child or their household, and/or following a risk assessment for children with an EHC plan). Attendance of vulnerable children and returning children will be monitored robustly.

Staff Training and Safeguarding Induction

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and read Part 1 of KCSiE. These staff will be made aware of any new local arrangements. New staff who have been recruited and start work in Term 6 will receive a safeguarding induction.

Mental Health

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as COVID-19, can affect the mental health of children and their parents. The schools will ensure that appropriate support is in place for them. This will vary according to the needs of the child/parent (over the phone, for example). Teachers will continue to be aware of the impact the current circumstances can have on the mental health of those pupils who are continuing to work from home, including when setting expectations of children's work.

Online Safety

As more children return it will be important that the schools continue to provide a safe online environment for those who remain at home. The schools will continue to ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect children. LA support will ensure that each school has the technical knowledge and support to maintain safe IT arrangements.

The schools will continue to do all that they reasonably can to keep all children safe, including those who continue to remain at home. It is important that all staff who interact with children continue to look out for signs that a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with via the schools' Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the Online Safety Policy. Referrals should continue to be made to children's social care where appropriate.

Staff are expected to follow the schools' Staff Code of Conduct (including the April 2020 addendum) rigorously.

The schools will continue to be in regular contact with all of its parents and carers. These communications will continue to be used to reinforce the importance of children being safe online.