



Kings Meadow School

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COVID-19 School Closure Arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection

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1. Scope

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from our local safeguarding partners (Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP), NHS Nene Clinical Commissioning Group and Northamptonshire Chief Office of Police) and the local authority (LA), Northamptonshire County Council.

It sets out changes to our normal Safeguarding 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 current Safeguarding Policy continues to apply.

2. Context

From 20th March 2020 parents and carers were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response - who absolutely need to attend.

Schools and all childcare providers were asked to provide care for a limited number of children: children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

This addendum of the Kings Meadow School Safeguarding and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements.

3. Core Safeguarding Principles

Kings Meadow 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
- Staff should take appropriate steps to ensure that safeguards are in place and children are protected when they are online
- It is essential that unsuitable people don't enter the school workforce or gain access to children.



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4. Key Contacts

Role	Name	Contact Number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Sasha Lees	07507 774085	slees@kingsmeadow.northants.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead & Headteacher	Helen McCormack	07731 110525	HMcCormack@kingsmeadow.northants.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead & Family Support Worker	Paula Jones	07731 110563	pjones@kingsmeadow.northants.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Amanda Tanfield	N/A	bursar@kingsmeadow.northants-ecl.gov.uk
Chair of Governors	Dawn Exley	N/A	c/o bursar@kingsmeadow.northants-ecl.gov.uk
Safeguarding Governor	Hugh Williams	N/A	HWilliams@kingsmeadow.northants.sch.uk
Designated Officer (Formerly LADO)	Chris Lamb Andy Smith	N/A	doreferral@northamptonshire.gov.uk
Northamptonshire MASH Team		0300 126 1000 Option 1	



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5. Vulnerable Children

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
 - Who otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

Those with an EHC Plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the Local Authority and parents/carers, 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 EHCPs can be cared for safely at home.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Leads, know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support and this need for a school place is reviewed weekly.

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

Kings Meadow School will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's 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 Sasha Lees.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and Kings Meadow School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

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

Kings Meadow School will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including participating in remote learning (as communicated through teacher/parent emails).



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

*Current Position: School is currently closed due to all parents and carers withdrawing their children. This position is reviewed weekly by DSLs with all families, and parents/carers can request that a school place is considered for their child at any time.

Kings Meadow School and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school or whether they can be safely cared for at home in line with the first principal of the government guidance. Kings Meadow will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not, in cases where a school place has been accepted.

To support the above, the Kings Meadow Senior Leadership team will, when communicating with parents 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, Kings Meadow will notify their social worker and seek regular updates from that social worker concerning contact that they have had with the family.

Keeping records of who is on site

Should the school be open, we will keep a record of which DSL, staff, volunteers and pupils are on site each day. For volunteers, we will record that appropriate checks have been carried out for them.

We will continue to keep our single central record up to date.

We will use the single central record to log everyone working or volunteering in our school each day.

Children attending other settings

Where children are temporarily required to attend another setting, we will make sure the receiving school is provided with any relevant welfare and child protection information.

Wherever possible, our DSL (or deputy) and/or special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) will share, as applicable:

- The reason(s) why the child is considered vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them
- The child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or personal education plan
- Details of the child's social worker
- Details of the virtual school head

We will share this information before the child arrives as far as is possible, and otherwise as soon as possible afterwards.

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7. Designated Safeguarding Lead

Kings Meadow School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and three Deputy DSLs.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Sasha Lees

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Helen McCormack, Paula Jones and Amanada Tanfield.

The role of the DSL during this period, in addition to the ongoing duties associated with the role, might include updating and managing access to child protection online management system (MyConcern) and liaising with the offsite DSLs. 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.

If the school is open, a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available on site. In the event of school closure, a trained DSL (or deputy) will be contactable via phone or online video (using Microsoft Teams), for example when working from home. It is important that all Kings Meadow School staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL. On each day staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to speak to them.

The DSL and all DDSs will continue to engage with social workers as appropriate, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which will be undertaken remotely.

8. Reporting a Concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding Policy; this includes making a report via MyConcern, which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access MyConcern from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the headteacher. Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concern to the headteacher. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally by telephone and followed up with an email to the headteacher.

Concerns around the headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Dawn Exley.

9. Working with Other Agencies

Kings Meadow will continue to work with children's social care and with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

- Our 3 local safeguarding partners
- The local authority about 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.

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10. 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 have not been able to attend refresher training.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). The DSL will communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

Recruitment and Induction

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, following our Safer Recruitment Procedures, so that adults and volunteers who work in our school are safe to work with children.

We will make sure staff and volunteers are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements.

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive:

- A safeguarding induction
- A copy of our children protection policy (and this addendum)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1

In urgent cases, when validating proof of identity documents to apply for a DBS check, we will initially accept verification of scanned documents via online video link, rather than being in physical possession of the original documents. This approach is in line with revised guidance from the DBS.

New staff must still present the original documents when they first attend work at our school.

We will continue to do our usual checks on new volunteers, and do risk assessments to decide whether volunteers who are not in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with paragraphs 167-172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

11. Peer-on-peer Abuse

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education when managing reports and supporting victims of peer-on-peer abuse.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately.



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12. Safeguarding for Children Not Attending School

We have contact plans for all children who attend Kings Meadow, including those with a social worker and children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where:

They won't be attending school (for example where the school, parent/carer and social worker, if relevant, have decided together that this wouldn't be in the child's best interests); or

- they would usually attend but have to self-isolate
- the parents/carers have made the decision that it is safer to keep the child at home.

These plans, in 'Safeguarding Expectations with Remote Working' set out:

- how often the school will make contact
- which staff member(s) will make contact
- how they will make contact
- how contact will be monitored and recorded
- actions to be taken should parents/carers not respond to contact attempted by the school.

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them weekly.

If we are not able to make contact, we will:

- send a text in the first instance
- Follow up with a phone call to the family
- Risk assess as DSLs and agree next steps, which may include contacting the MASH team or the police.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral or family support, DSLs will ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child.

Details of this plan must be recorded on MyConcern, as should a record of contact made.

Kings Meadow School and its DSLs will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan. This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

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



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13. Safeguarding All Children

Staff and volunteers are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children at greater risk.

Staff and volunteers will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on pupils' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately. In particular, children are likely to be spending more time online.

14. Online safety

In school

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school.

If systems fail, our contingency plan is to contact EasiPC for support, which is available remotely.

Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff behaviour policy/code of conduct/IT acceptable use policy.

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
- are aware that they should only use reputable online companies or tutors if they wish to supplement the remote teaching and resources our school provides
- know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online
- are encouraged to report any concerns of this nature to the child's teacher via email
- have access to this information, available via our school website:
<https://www.kingsmeadow.northants.sch.uk/index.php/parents-carers/learning-at-home>

Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in this addendum.

15. Mental health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. We will also signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time.

When setting expectations for pupils learning remotely and not attending school, teachers will consider the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health.



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16. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 3-4 weeks, by Sasha Lees (DSL)). At every review, it will be approved by the full governing body.

17. Links with Other Policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy
- Whistle-blowing Policy

19. Review Dates

1st May 2020

1st June 2020

1st July 2020