



PensMeadowSchool

Living, Growing, Learning

**Covid-19 Addendum to
Safeguarding Policy**

JANUARY 2021

Mr M. Pawlowicz
DEPUTY HEADTEACHER

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Context

From 5th January 2021 parents 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 are asked to provide care for a limited number of children including children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

Please see latest guidance from 8th January 2021 (and keep an eye out for latest Government info which could be subject to change.)

What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/951035/210108_Parents_Guidance_vF.pdf

Critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educational settings:

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

Providing school meals during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance-for-schools>

This addendum of the Pens Meadow School Safeguarding, and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

Key contacts

| Role | Name | Contact number | Email |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------|--|
| Designated Safeguarding Lead | Mr Michal Pawlowicz | 01834 818945 | mpawlowicz@pens-meadow.dudley.sch.uk |
| Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead | Mrs Marie Hunter Mrs Alison Austin | 01834 818945 | mhunter@pens-meadow.dudley.sch.uk aaustin@pens-meadow.dudley.sch.uk |
| Headteacher | Mrs Marie Hunter | 01834 818945 | mhunter@pens-meadow.dudley.sch.uk |
| Chair of Governors | Mr Paul Leyshon | 01834 818945 | pleyshon9@gmail.com |

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.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child Protection Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority. A child may be deemed vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989. The new guidance states that there is no requirement to risk assess children this time.

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

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputies) 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.

Pens 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) Andrew.Wright@dudley.gov.uk for looked-after and previously looked-after children. The lead person for this will be: Mr Michal Pawlowicz, Deputy Headteacher

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they are not clinically extremely vulnerable and have been advised to shield. 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 Pens Meadow School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

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

The school will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

Attendance monitoring

Schools will need to continue to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes and follow up on non-attendance of pupils who are expected to be in attendance. Pens Meadow School will follow up on any pupil that they expect to attend and subsequently does not.

As vulnerable children are still expected to attend school full time, they should not be marked as Code X if they are not in school (except if they are shielding, self-isolating or quarantining). Schools and colleges should encourage vulnerable children to attend but if the parent of a vulnerable child wishes their child to be absent from school, the parent should let the school know that the pupil will not be attending. The Department for Education expects schools and colleges to grant such applications for leave given the exceptional circumstances. This should be recorded as code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) unless another authorised absence code is more applicable.

As with vulnerable children, critical worker parents and carers should let schools know if their child will not be attending and, if not, schools should grant a leave of absence (code C) given the exceptional circumstances.

All pupils who are not expected to be in school should be marked as Code X. They are not attending because they are following public health advice.

To support the above, the school will, when communicating with parents/carers and allocated social workers, etc., 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 will notify their allocated social worker.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

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

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mr M. Pawlowicz.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are Mrs M. Hunter and Mrs A. Austin.

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or Deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case, a trained DSL (or Deputy) will be available to contact 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, a Senior Leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

This might include updating and managing access to child protection online management system, School safeguarding systems / CPOMS 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 school 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.

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

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 in person to the DSL and then record it on CPOMS, which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Headteacher, etc. This will ensure that the concern is received.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately in person to the DSL.

If there is a significant safeguarding concern and/or if any child, where staying at home for a prolonged period raises a concern for DSL, refer to MASH/Children's Social Services outlining the risks on a MARF and record safeguarding details on CPOMS.

MASH contact: - 0300 555 0050 or 0300 555 8574 after 5pm/weekends and Bank Holidays. Email: MASH_Referrals@dudley.gov.uk

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 verbally, and then followed up with an email to the headteacher. Managing allegations process should be followed in the usual way. Contact LADO, Yvonne Nelson-Brown Allegations@dudley.gov.uk

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Mr Paul Leyshon.

Safeguarding Training and induction

DSL training will continue to take place albeit virtually. Should you require DSL training, please book your place via Revolution for Schools website.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020). 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 Pens Meadow School, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

If staff are deployed from another education 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

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the receiving setting's child protection policy, 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, Pens Meadow School will continue to follow the relevant Safer Recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) (KCSIE).

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.

Where school is utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 166 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

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. Full details can be found in KCSIE or contact LADO, for advice and guidance.

Pens Meadow School will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 173 of KCSIE and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct advice for making a referral.

During the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing

Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk

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 or college, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, Pens Meadow School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 153 to 159 in KCSIE.

Online safety in schools and colleges

Pens Meadow 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 and college

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 code of conduct.

Pens Meadow School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Virtual/Online & Remote Learning

Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- No 1:1s, groups only
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred.
- The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms provided by Pens Meadow School to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held

Supporting children not in school

Pens Meadow School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person.

Details of this communication must be recorded on CPOMS.

The communication may include remote contact, phone contact, text messages, video links and doorstep visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

School and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

Pens Meadow 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 the school need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Pens Meadow School will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

Supporting children in school

Pens Meadow School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

Pens Meadow 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.

Pens Meadow 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.

Pens Meadow School will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

Where Pens Meadow School has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – SLT will consult with Governing Body on potential impact on the provision.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Pens Meadow 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 part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within of the Child Protection Policy.

The school will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multiagency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on Schools safeguarding systems / CPOMS and appropriate referrals made.