

**Interim Addendum to:**  
**Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure for NAS  
Schools**

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## **Purpose**

From 20 March 2020, 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 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 NAS Safeguarding Children policy contains details of the individual safeguarding arrangements whilst the pandemic continues.

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## **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 plans (EHCP).

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 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.

Those with an EHCP will be risk-assessed in consultation with the Local Authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school or college place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHCP can safely remain at home.

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

The 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 the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (Child Protection Officer in Scotland) for the School / Service or the person nominated as their deputy.

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 school or children's service will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, the Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead / Child Protection Officer or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England / Scotland.

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

## **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.

The School and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school. The Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead / Child

Protection Officer / attendance officer / family liaison officer, will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend but who does not attend. 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, the school will, when communicating with parents and carers:

- confirm emergency contact numbers are correct
- 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, the school will notify their social worker.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead**

The optimal scenario is to have a trained Designated Safeguarding Lead / Child Protection Officer (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case, a trained Designated Safeguarding Lead / Child Protection Officer (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example when working from home.

Where a trained Designated Safeguarding Lead / Child Protection Officer (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 management system, CPOMS and liaising with the offsite Designated Safeguarding Lead / Child Protection Officer (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.

It is important that all school staff and volunteers have access to a trained Designated Safeguarding Lead / Child Protection Officer (or deputy). On each day staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to contact them.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead / Child Protection Officer will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

### **Reporting a concern**

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in their Local School Safeguarding Policy, this includes making a report via CPOMS / current systems used by the school which can be done remotely.

Where a school is not using CPOMS, the DSL / CPO must report using the NAS reporting systems via the Notifications Safeguarding Medication Errors inbox [Notifications.Safeguarding.MedicationErrors@nas.org.uk](mailto:Notifications.Safeguarding.MedicationErrors@nas.org.uk).

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead / Child Protection Officer, Principal and the Notifications Safeguarding Medication Errors inbox. This will ensure that the concern is received.

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

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should use the normal reporting procedures. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Principal whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the Principal and the Notifications Safeguarding Medication Errors inbox.

Concerns around the Principal should be directed to the Chair of Governors, Director for Education and Nominated Individual and Safeguarding Lead.

## **Safeguarding Training and induction**

Designated Safeguarding Lead / Child Protection Officer (DSL/CPO) 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 /CPO (or deputy) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL /CPO (or deputy) even if they miss their refresher training.

All existing school staff who have completed safeguarding training and in England have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) then the DSL /CPO will 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, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction via the online safeguarding training or face to face via the DSL / CPO using the NAS Safeguarding Children Induction Pack.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to the school, we will take into account the DfE / Education Scotland 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

We will train the staff in NAS Safeguarding processes and where practicable Studio 3 (using the S3 interim training plan).

For movement of staff between NAS schools/ children's service, upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the receiving setting's local safeguarding policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL / CPO's 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, we will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for the 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.

Where a school are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as per NAS Recruitment and Selection Policy.

Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

We 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. We will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).

During the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing: [Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto: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, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity.

As such, the school will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date.

### **Online safety in schools**

The 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 / children's services 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 NAS Online Safety 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 code of conduct.

The 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 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 the NAS to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

### **Supporting children not in school**

The NAS is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people.

Where the DSL /CPO 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 plan must be recorded on CPOMS / the schools recording system, as should a record of contact made.

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

The DSL /CPO 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 / CPO will consider any referrals as appropriate.

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

It is recognised 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 need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

The 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. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded on CPOMS / School safeguarding System.

## **Supporting children in school**

NAS schools are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all our students. School will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish.

The Principal will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

The 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 / Scotland on handwashing and other measures to limit the risk of spread of COVID19.

The 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. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded on CPOMS / School Safeguarding Systems.

Where the school has concerns about the impact of staff absence, the Principal will discuss them immediately with the Director of Education and a decision will be made as to the support that can be provided using the NAS decision making matrix.

## **Peer on Peer Abuse**

It is recognised 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 outlined within of the NAS Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure.

The 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 on CPOMS or via the Notifications Safeguarding Medication Errors inbox and appropriate referrals made.

## **Support from the NAS**

The Nominated Individual and Safeguarding Lead will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL to carry out their role effectively.

This includes, remotely accessing Child Protection files for the purpose of quality assurance, support, guidance and direction.