

Annex to Safeguarding Policy

COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding
and Child Protection within Red Kite Learning Trust

Context

From 20th 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. Schools are now open for children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. From Monday 15th June, students in Years 10 and 12 will also be invited into school for some face-to-face interaction.

This addendum of the Red Kite Learning Trust Safeguarding, and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

1. Vulnerable children
2. Key Contacts
3. Attendance monitoring
4. Designated Safeguarding Lead
5. Reporting a concern
6. Safeguarding Training and induction
7. Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff
8. Online safety in schools and colleges
9. Children and online safety away from school and college
10. Supporting children not in school
11. Supporting children in school
12. Peer on Peer Abuse
13. Support from Red Kite Learning Trust
14. Mental Health

1. Key contacts

RKLT

Role	Name	Contact Number	Email
CEO	Richard Sheriff	01423 574410	info@rklt.co.uk ? or sheriff@rklt.co.uk
Trust Safeguarding Lead - Interim	Neil Renton	01423 531127	nrx@harrogategrammar.co.uk
Safeguarding Trustee	Tricia Stowell	01423 574410	info@rklt.co.uk ? or StowellT@trust.rklt.co.uk

Temple Newsam Community Partnership

Role	Name	Contact Number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Lisa Oxley (MAT leave: Sept 2021)	07719 423180	oxleyl@rklt.co.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Gemma Sargeant	07513 121588	sargeantg@rklt.co.uk

2. 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 (EHCPs).

Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child Protection Plan, a Child in Need 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 EHCPs can safely remain at home.

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

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

RKLT schools 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.

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 RKLT schools will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19, RKL schools or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

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

3. Attendance monitoring

RKL schools should:

- resume taking the attendance register when more groups of pupils begin to return to school
- consider using the attendance and absence codes in the following sections when completing the attendance register until further notice

Pupils who are not eligible to attend a session

- This includes any pupil who is not in an eligible year group or priority group (children of critical workers and vulnerable children). This may also include children who are in an eligible year group but are not required in school for a specific session.
- They should be recorded as **code X** (not required to be in school). (Temporarily, code X can be used for compulsory school age children – usually it is only used where non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.)

Pupils who are eligible to attend a session but do not

This includes children in eligible year groups, children of critical workers and vulnerable children, such as:

- where a pupil is shielding, self-isolating, or the pupil has an education, health and care plan (EHCP) and their risk assessment says that their needs cannot be safely met in school, they should be recorded as code Y (unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances). (Temporarily, code Y can be used where a pupil is prevented from attending school due to following government guidance on coronavirus). To help you to complete the educational setting status form, you should note whether the absence is due to shielding or isolation
- where a pupil cannot attend school due to illness, as would normally be the case, the pupil should be recorded as code I (illness). To help you to complete the educational setting status form, you should note whether the illness involves coronavirus symptoms
- where a pupil does not attend school - despite being eligible and is not shielding, self-isolating, unable to attend due to illness, nor has an EHCP risk assessment saying their needs cannot be safely met at school, the pupil should be recorded as code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) where no other authorised absence code is appropriate

At this time, all absence should be classed as authorised.

Pupils who are attending other schools

Where a pupil is attending:

- another school at which they are registered (for example, a pupil referral unit (PRU)), as would normally be the case, code D (dual registered) should be used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question as they are attending the other school at which they are registered

- a host school on a temporary basis because their home school cannot accommodate them, the pupil will not be registered at the host school. The home school should record the pupil as attending an approved education activity using code B (off-site educational activity) - the host school does not need to add this child to their attendance register but should keep a record of their attendance for safeguarding purposes and include the child in their daily totals for the educational setting status form - schools should put in place arrangements whereby the host school notifies the home school of any absences.

Using other authorised absence and attendance codes

Where other specific authorised absence and attendance codes are more appropriate schools may want to use these as usual, such as code M (medical appointment).

4. Designated Safeguarding Lead

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 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, 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, 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.

It is important that all RKL school staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day staff on site will be made aware of who 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 done remotely.

5. Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the RKL Safeguarding Policy, to contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

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 report the concern to the Principal/ Cluster Lead. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Principal/ Cluster Lead whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the Principal/ Cluster Lead.

Concerns around the Principal/ Cluster Lead should be directed to the Chair of Governors and/or CEO of RKL.

Red Kite Learning Trust will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

6. 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 safeguarding training and have read Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). 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 RKL 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 schools, 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 RKL, schools should seek assurance from the RKL HR Lead that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training.

Upon arrival, they will receive confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements. All RKL Schools work to the same Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy and all staff access to this through their own or the receiving school's website or through the school's HR contact. It is not expected that staff will work across the 2 LA areas.

7. 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, RKL schools 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 (2019) (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 RKL schools are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

RKL schools 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 at paragraph 163 of KCSIE.

RKL schools will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 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, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, RKL schools will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

8. Online safety in schools and colleges

RKLT schools 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.

9. Children and online safety away from school and college

It is important that all staff who are interacting with children, including online, continue to look out for signs that 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.

Staff must not use any other platforms other than Microsoft Teams for online interactions with students. That includes the avoidance of all learning platforms, with and without webcams usage.

10. Supporting children not in school

RKLT schools are 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 plan must be recorded, as should a record of contact have made.

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

RKLT schools and its DSL 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.

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

RKLT 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 RKLT schools need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

RKLT 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.

11. Supporting children in school

RKLT is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

RKLT schools will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. Each Headteacher/Principal will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

RKLT schools/ services 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 COVID-19.

RKLT schools 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.

Where RKLT schools have concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – will discuss them immediately with the Trust.

12. Peer on Peer Abuse

RKLT 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 and appropriate referrals made.

13. Support from the Multi-Academy Trust

The Red Kite Learning Trust will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL to carry out their role effectively.

Each RKLT school/ service will also provide regular group and individual supervision sessions for relevant CP designates. This may take the form of an online meeting.

Safeguarding is also an agenda item in the weekly Executive Headteacher Meetings.

14. Mental Health

We recognise that the current exceptional circumstances may affect the mental health and well-being of pupils, parents and staff in many different ways. Schools will ensure that they have details of appropriate support available and this will be accessible for pupils, parents and staff.

These are unusual and difficult times for many people and for some families they may become traumatic times and involve loss and grief. We provide appropriate home learning for our pupils to complete during this period of time whilst the vast majority of pupils are at home. Although learning is very important, and we want to make the best use of this time, we recognise that the expectations of this may be challenging on some students and families. Schools will provide reassurance and support to pupils, parents and staff in order to manage these expectations without putting additional stresses and pressure on individuals.

RKLT will ensure that there is a plan in place for how any bereavements may be handled, including obtaining support services as appropriate.

Useful contacts/web links:

Child line: 0800 1111

www.childline.org.uk

www.nhs.uk

www.Mind.org.uk

www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing

www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-tips

www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak

www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/talking-to-children-about-feelings/

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing>

www.mindmate.org.uk/