

SAFEGUARDING POLICY (Including the Child Protection Policy) ADDENDUM in response to COVID-19

Based on [DfE guidance 'Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other provider' March 2020](#). This addendum will be reviewed following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures and reshared as required.

Context

On 20th March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, as part of the response to coronavirus (COVID-19). Schools and 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.

The way Tonbridge School is currently operating in response to coronavirus is fundamentally different, however, our safeguarding principles in accordance with School [policies](#) and in particular our [Safeguarding Policy](#), remain the same:

This addendum contains details of any amendments to our existing safeguarding arrangements.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)

Ideally the DSL (or deputy) will be present on-site, however if this is not possible, a DSL will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example 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 will include updating safeguarding files and liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and as required liaising with social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the School.

The DSL/Deputy DSL's will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

Vulnerable children

Ensuring that vulnerable children remain protected is a top priority for Tonbridge School. 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. Please see DfE guidance for further information on [vulnerable children](#).

There is an expectation that children with a social worker will attend a provision, unless in consultation with the child's social worker and family it is agreed this is not in the best interests of the child. Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, professionals will talk through these worries with the parents following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Children with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the Local Authority and parents and a decision will be made about whether they should continue to attend School.

If vulnerable children are not attending school, we will regularly keep in contact by telephone with them.

Tonbridge School will continue to work with those professionals involved with children and share relevant information with them such as social workers, early help workers and virtual school heads (VSH). This is especially important during the COVID-19 period. This will include information about attendance and any welfare concerns. If there is a safeguarding concern, this will be shared with the relevant professional as soon as possible.

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. Tonbridge School will complete both the KCC and government [daily online attendance](#) form to keep a record of children of critical workers and vulnerable children who are attending school/college.

Tonbridge School and social workers will agree with families or carers whether children in need should attend and will follow up where a child or children are supposed to be attending but do not. In all circumstances where a vulnerable child or children does not take up their place, or discontinues, the school will notify their social worker and follow up with the family or carer.

Tonbridge School will also follow up with families or carers that have arranged a place for their child or children, namely keyworkers or children that are considered vulnerable but not open to any agencies and do not attend.

Staff will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children.

Reporting concerns

All staff will continue to look out for any signs that indicate a child may be at risk, both on and off site, including online.

- If a member of staff or volunteer has any safeguarding concerns about a child, this will be reported to the DSL as soon as possible.
- If the concern is urgent, the member of staff or volunteer will speak to a DSL in person or via phone/video call if they are not on site, immediately.
- In the event a member of staff or volunteer cannot make contact with a DSL, this will not delay them taking immediate action to safeguard a child.

Concerns will be recorded using existing safeguarding processes as outlined in our [Safeguarding Policy](#).

Children are encouraged to report concerns via existing systems, or to a trusted adult at home.

Parents are encouraged to report concerns via existing systems.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children, they should report the concern to the Headmaster. If there are concerns about any member of staff or volunteer, the LADO service will be consulted with.

Concerns around the Headmaster should be directed to the Chair of Governors.

Safeguarding training and induction

DSL training is 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. Formal DSL refresher training will be undertaken as soon as possible. DSLs will continue to keep their knowledge up to date through other means.

All existing staff have read KCSIE 2019 Part 1 and accessed safeguarding training. Staff will be made aware if any processes have changed with the sharing of this addendum and the DSL will communicate any changes to local processes directly.

All new staff and volunteers will have an induction provided via the DSL and will be provided with a copy of the Tonbridge School Safeguarding Policy and Covid-19 Addendum.

Safer recruitment

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. During Covid-19 if Tonbridge School recruit new staff we will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment practices. If volunteers are recruited, we will continue to follow the guidance in accordance with KCSIE 2019 and volunteers who have not had the relevant checks will not be left unsupervised with a child.

If staff from other settings volunteer or begin working at Tonbridge School we will ensure they have a relevant DBS check following DfE guidance at this time and we will risk assess staff from other settings, as we would for a volunteer.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to Tonbridge 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.

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. Tonbridge School will continue to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child in accordance with KCSIE 2019 and will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) where appropriate. During the period Covid-19 all referrals will be made by emailing Misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk.

Tonbridge School will continue to update the single central record and will log details of any risk assessment carried out on volunteers and staff on loan from elsewhere.

Supporting children in School

Tonbridge School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils. There will be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. A senior member of staff will ensure that there are appropriate staff on site and that staff to children ratios have been considered to maximise the safety of children.

Tonbridge School will follow the current government guidance in relation to social distancing and all matters relating to public health from the respective websites and outlets.

Tonbridge School will ensure that all children who are either categorised as vulnerable or children of critical workers and are in attendance are appropriately supported.

Tonbridge School will continue to record any support provided to children in relation to safeguarding issues on their respective safeguarding recording system.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Tonbridge School continues to recognise and respond to cases of Peer on Peer abuse by considering each incident on a case by case basis and basing any intervention on usual processes outlined within the [Safeguarding Policy](#). We recognise that the current circumstances and the changeable nature of current Government guidance may mean that the School may need to adapt elements of the process in some cases to ensure that they are able to respond in line with Government advice when required.

The DSL will continue to consult as appropriate with multi-agency professionals to ensure that children's safety and wellbeing is not compromised when incidents of peer on peer abuse are brought to their attention.

Online safety

Expectations with regards online behaviour and education when using devices or internet access on site will continue to be implemented in line with School policies. Any concerns regarding onsite online behaviour or use will be responded to in line with these policies. We will continue to provide a safe online learning environment where children use devices or School internet access such as appropriate filtering and monitoring.

Use of personal devices, including mobile phones, will be managed in line with existing [policies](#).

Online safety away from School

All staff will continue to look out for any signs that indicate a child may be at risk online and will report and respond to concerns in line with this and other policies. Where necessary, referrals will be made to LADO, children's social care and as required, the police.

Boys are encouraged to report concerns to a member of staff or a trusted adult at home. Where this is not possible, additional support can be accessed online via various websites including: Childline (www.childline.org.uk), UK Safer Internet Centre's 'Report Harmful Content' (<https://reportharmfulcontent.com>), National Crime Agency Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command (NCA-CEOP) (www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre).

Parents are encouraged to ensure children are appropriately supervised online and that appropriate parent controls are implemented.

All communication with boys and parents will take place using School provided or approved communication channels; for example, School provided email accounts, Microsoft 365 (including Teams), and Firefly our Virtual Learning Environment. Any pre-existing relationships or situations which mean this cannot be complied with will be discussed with the DSL.

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

Staff and learners will engage with remote teaching and learning in line with existing behaviour policies and as set out in our Remote Teaching and Learning Policy. This includes only using online tools that have been evaluated and agreed by leadership, ensuring remote learning activities are planned in accordance with our curriculum and SEND policies, taking boys needs and technology access into account and where possible, pre-record content.

If remote learning is taking place 'live', staff and boys will ensure a professional environment is maintained. This includes recording the attendance of any online lessons held or made, and sessions involving cameras will not be delivered in any one-to-one situation, unless pre-approval has been given by the DSL via the 'Consent to one-to-one Lessons' permission forms. This includes participants

wearing suitable dress, using professional language, ensuring backgrounds of videos (live or pre-recorded) are neutral and appropriate, personal information or inappropriate or unsuitable personal items are not visible and where possible, other household members should not be in the background or shot; if this unavoidable, they should follow appropriate language and behaviour expectations. Staff will report any concerns to the DSL. Staff will revisit our acceptable use of technology policy with boys as necessary.

Supporting children not in School

Tonbridge School will continue to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all boys that remain on the School roll.

All DSLs will continue to identify those vulnerable children that would benefit from Early Help, provide pastoral support and consider whether they would benefit from external support also. There will be clear plans around how best to communicate with boys who are identified as vulnerable, as well as those about whom DSLs have concerns about who do not receive a statutory service. This could include telephone contact and/or doorstep visits but is at the discretion of the DSL.

The DSL will work closely with all relevant agencies and professionals regarding safeguarding a boy who is not on site and any plans will be reviewed regularly and if concerns become significant, the DSL will consider any requests for support if considered appropriate.

We recognise that this is a difficult time for children and young people who consider School as a safe place and the current situation may impact on boys, staff and parents' mental health, and we will utilise our website, Parents' Portal and social media presence to ensure that safeguarding messages are shared with boys and their families. This will include links to appropriate services and resources that are aimed at supporting them throughout this period.

Additional support and links

As well as through existing School mechanisms, boys, staff and parents can access age appropriate and practical support and advice via the Boys', Staff and Parents Wellbeing pages as well as a range of national and local services:

- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- Kent Resilience Hub: <https://kentresiliencehub.org.uk>
- NSPCC: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/how-to-have-difficult-conversations-with-children/>

DfE Guidance

- Closure of educational settings: information for parents and carers: www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers
- Vulnerable Children Guidance: www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people
- COVID-19: guidance for educational settings: www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19
- Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers: www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers
- Coronavirus (COVID-19): attendance recording for educational settings: www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings