

Annex to King's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy – January 2021

King's Safeguarding and Child Protection during the COVID-19 measures

The way all schools are currently operating in response to coronavirus (COVID-19) is fundamentally different to business as usual. Most children are no longer in a school setting and staff numbers have been affected by the outbreak.

From 5th January 2021 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools only to remain open for children who are vulnerable and for the children of parents who are critical to the COVID-19 response (Key Workers) and cannot be safely cared for at home.

This Annex for King's Rochester, contains details regarding Safeguarding and Child Protection arrangements during the time of these Government measures. The current arrangements will be reviewed by the DSL, &/or a deputy DSL, as circumstances continue to evolve or following updated Department for Education advice or guidance. This update is available on the school website (www.Kings-Rochester.co.uk) and has been made available to staff by email.

Safeguarding Priority

During these challenging times the safeguarding of all children at King's Rochester – whether they are currently at home or in attendance – continues to be our priority. The following fundamental safeguarding principles remain the same:

- the best interests of children continue to come first;
- if anyone in School has a safeguarding concern, they should act immediately;
- a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy DSL will always be available;
- no unsuitable people will be allowed to gain access to children;
- children should continue to be protected when they are online.

Current school position

King's Rochester is currently open only to the children of Key Workers, who cannot safely be cared for at home, and those classed as vulnerable children. The children are supervised by King's Rochester staff who are aware of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures laid out in that policy for child protection. These policies and practices remain current and in place.

The majority of children are being looked after at home in accordance with Government guidelines and are undertaking Remote Learning, during term time. The current policy and practices remain current for staff members engaging with pupils during Remote Learning also.

Safeguarding Partners' Advice

We continue to work closely with the local safeguarding partners, and this annex is consistent with their advice to follow existing policies and procedures as far as possible. However, any Strategy Meetings or

Child Protection Conferences will take place via conference call rather than in person. Referrals will continue via the usual channels of telephone or portal.

Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities for safeguarding at King's Rochester remain in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend multi-agency meetings remotely, when necessary.

If possible, the DSL will be available on site for the school day during term time. Where the DSL, or a deputy DSL, cannot be on site, then they will still co-ordinate all safeguarding on site in consultation by phone.

The role of all staff is, as always, to remain vigilant and report any concerns immediately.

Key Contacts

DSL (Whole School) - Catherine Openshaw - copenshaw@kings-rochester.co.uk
- 07973 762990

DDSL (Pre-Prep) - Kellie Crozer - kcrozer@kings-rochester.co.uk
- 07989 556216

DDSL (Prep) - Sarah Walsh - swalsh@kings-rochester.co.uk
- 07548 483485

DDSL (Senior) - Stephen Padfield - spadfield@kings-rochester.co.uk
- 07747 775385

Medway Children's Services First Response - 01634 334466

Kent Children's Services First Response - 03000 411111

Kent and Medway Out of Hours team - 03000 419191

Police - 101 or 999

NSPCC - 0800 028 0285

Childline - 0800 1111

Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with 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 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.

There is an expectation that all vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend school, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk.

Those children at King's Rochester with an EHC plan have been risk-assessed in consultation with the parents 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 EHC plans can safely remain at home.

Senior leaders at King's Rochester, and the DSL (and deputies), know who the most vulnerable children are and, if deemed necessary, may offer a school place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

Increased Vulnerability or Risk

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. Staff should be mindful of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home. Where we are providing for children of Key Workers and vulnerable children on site, we will ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

Staff and volunteers are asked to be alert and watchful of the mental health of children and their parents and should contact the DSL or a deputy if they have any concerns.

Attendance

Schools have been informed that they do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up non-attendance. For children in attendance at School, accurate registers will be kept each day. Where a child is expected but does not arrive at school, the usual attendance procedure will be followed and contact made with the family. If contact cannot be made after a reasonable number of attempts, the DSL or a deputy DSL will be informed.

The DSL or a deputy will make another attempt to contact the parents through various methods, such as telephone and email in the first instance. If contact cannot be made, or if the DSL or a deputy DSL deems it necessary, an appropriate agency may be informed.

Where a vulnerable child does not take up their place, we will notify their social worker.

Online attendance is monitored by each part of the School and phone calls/emails made by Senior Leaders when deemed necessary and/or appropriate.

Reporting Concerns about Children or Staff

The importance of all staff and volunteers acting immediately on any safeguarding concerns remains paramount. Staff and volunteers will continue to follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures that are already in place at King's Rochester and advise the DSL or DDSL of any concerns they have about any child, including those who are not attending school.

The varied arrangements in place as a result of the COVID-19 measures do not reduce the risks that children may face from staff or volunteers. As such, it remains extremely important that any allegations of abuse made against staff or volunteers are dealt with thoroughly and efficiently and in accordance with the Allegations Against Staff Appendix in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. At King's Rochester, such allegations should be reported directly to the Principal.

Staff training and induction

The DSL and all the DDSLs were able to receive their refresher training in line with government guidance, hence, the trained DSLs and deputy DSLs are fully up to date with their training.

All current school staff have received safeguarding training and have read Part One and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020). When new staff are recruited or volunteers join us, they will receive the usual safeguarding induction in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

If staff from another setting attend the school site then, in line with government guidance, we will not undertake any additional safeguarding checks if the setting providing those staff confirm that:

- the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check and, that in the opinion of that setting, nothing resulted from those checks that provided any cause for concern;
- there are no safeguarding investigations into the conduct of that individual;
- the individual remains suitable to work with children.

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, King's will continue to follow the Safer Recruitment policy that is in place.

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.

For volunteers, King's will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to engage in regulated activity.

It is essential from a safeguarding perspective that we are aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers are on the school site and that the appropriate checks have been carried out on those individuals. We will continue to maintain the single central record (SCR) during these measures to ensure we have this awareness.

Peer on Peer Abuse

King's recognises that children can abuse their peers and staff are clear about the School's policy and procedures regarding peer on peer abuse. All peer on peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. It is also recognised that abuse can still occur during a school closure or partial closure and between those children who do attend the school site during these measures.

Staff should remain vigilant to the signs of peer-on-peer abuse and follow the process set out in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Online safety

It is likely that children will be using the internet and engaging with social media far more during this time. Staff are aware of the signs of cyberbullying and other online risks and the School's filtering and monitoring software remains in use during this time to safeguarding and support children.

Children in the Preparatory and Senior Schools are asked to adhere to an additional online code of conduct during this period of remote learning. The code of conduct is available on theSchool website.

King's Rochester will ensure that any use of online tools is in line with GDPR regulations.

Staff who interact with children online should do so only via Seesaw, telephone, school emails, Google Classroom or Google Meet (since these Google sites are safeguarded and meetings can be recorded). Staff should also continue to look out for signs that a child may be at risk. If a staff member is concerned about a child, that staff member must report that concern to the DSL or to a deputy DSL.

New Children at School

Children may join King's during the time of these measures. When they do, King's will continue to procure the relevant welfare and child protection information from their previous setting. This is relevant for all children that join, but it is especially important where children are vulnerable.

For vulnerable children, the reasons for this vulnerability will be considered and any arrangements put in place to support them. As a minimum, if appropriate, we will seek access to that child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or, for looked-after children, their personal education plan and know who the child's social worker.

Ideally this will happen before a child arrives but where that is not possible it will happen as soon as reasonably practicable.

Any exchanges of information will happen at DSL (or DDSL) level. Where this is not possible, a senior leader will take responsibility.

The DSL will consider the information received, and decide how risks will be managed and which staff need to know the information.

Supporting High-Level Pastoral Children that are not in School

Where the DSL/DDSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive additional pastoral support in school, a communication plan will be put in place to support that child. It will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains current during these measures.

Catherine Openshaw
King's Rochester DSL
5th January 2021