

## **Annex to Reed's School's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy - Child protection during the COVID-19 measures –Version 3**

### **Context**

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic meant that the School operated remotely for the Summer Term, with pupils returning for the Autumn Term. A further lockdown has meant that the School is operating remotely again in the Spring Term until further notice.

Although the principles of the School's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy and our Staff Code of Conduct remain in place, this third Annex to our Safeguarding Policy has been written to clarify specific aspects of school life whilst pupils are taught remotely whilst off site.

This updated Annex to our Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy has been written in line with the Department for Education guidance, the Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures and the Independent Schools Inspectorate "Safeguarding Prompts for Remote Teaching" and sets out details of our safeguarding arrangements for:

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### **Version control and dissemination**

This is version 3.0 of this annex. It will be reviewed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs will continue to evolve or following updated Department for Education advice or guidance. It is available on the School website and has been circulated to staff.

We will ensure that on any given day all staff and volunteers in attendance will be aware of who the DSL and deputy DSLs are and how staff and volunteers can to speak to them. In effect, there are no changes in this regard and our normal safeguarding procedures should be followed, with concerns being raised via MyConcern wherever possible. If you need to speak to the DSL, email [aballs@reeds.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:aballs@reeds.surrey.sch.uk) and a conversation can be arranged.

## **Safeguarding priority**

During these challenging times the safeguarding of all Reed's pupils – whether they are currently attending School or at home – continues to be our priority. The following fundamental safeguarding principles remain the same:

- the best interests of pupils continue to come first
- if anyone in our School has a safeguarding concern, they will act immediately
- a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL will always be available
- no unsuitable people will be allowed to gain access to pupils
- pupils should continue to be protected when they are online.

## **Current school position**

*Following the announcement of a further national lockdown, the vast majority of pupils are working remotely from home. There are a few key worker and vulnerable pupils being supervised on site where they cannot work at home. The School's COVID risk assessment continues to be reviewed and updated.*

All staff and volunteers attending on site from outside our school will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of safeguarding risks and know how to act if they have concerns.

## **Safeguarding partners' advice**

We continue to work closely with our three safeguarding partners, and we will ensure this Annex is consistent with their advice. This will include expectations for supporting children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need. The current advice is below.







<https://www.surreyscp.org.uk/2020/03/26/surrey-county-council-childrens-social-care-covid-19-update/>

## **Roles and responsibilities**

The roles and responsibilities for safeguarding in our school remain in line with our Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy.

The School's DSL and at least one Deputy DSL will be available on site during the school day. Where this is not possible, we will:

- have a trained DSL or deputy DSL available by email, telephone and/or online video

<b>Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)</b>	<b>Mr A R W Balls</b> Deputy Head (Pastoral)		01932 588023	aballs@reeds.surrey.sch.uk
Deputy DSL	<b>Mr J S Ross</b> Assistant Head (Academic Development)		01932 869058	jrross@reeds.surrey.sch.uk
Deputy DSL	<b>Mr A J Blackman</b> Housemaster of Bristowe & Director of Tennis		01932 869079	ablackman@reeds.surrey.sch.uk
Deputy DSL	<b>Ms E E McGhee</b> Head of Academic Support		01932 588027	emcghee@reeds.surrey.sch.uk
Deputy DSL	<b>Mr J W Norman</b> Housemaster of Mullens		01932 588004	jnorman@reeds.surrey.sch.uk
Deputy DSL	<b>Mr L Pytel</b> Assistant Head (Middle School)		01932 869044	lpytel@reeds.surrey.sch.uk

## 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 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. Where a parent does not want their child to attend school, and their child is considered vulnerable, we will discuss this with the social worker and explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the local authority and parents to decide whether they need to continue to be educated on the School site 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.

We will monitor the welfare of our pupils whilst they are at home, particularly those who might be deemed as more vulnerable, and will consider the case for them to attend School if needed.

Pastoral leaders at Reed's School, including the DSL, know who our most vulnerable children are, and they have the flexibility to investigate an appropriate course of action for 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 will be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work. The School is prepared and is helping support to support pupils who for whatever reason are struggling emotionally during the pandemic.

Our staff and volunteers will be aware of the mental health of [children](#) and their [parents and carers](#) and will contact the DSL or a Deputy DSL if they have any concerns.

### **Attendance**

Registration takes place as normal at 8.20am and again during period 4a. Pupils who are absent are marked as such on SIMS, with the front office chasing up absences as normal. Pupils are also registered in every lesson, with absences being chased up.

Where a child is expected but does not register with their tutor or engage in lessons we will follow our attendance procedure and attempt to contact the family. If contact cannot be made, the DSL will be informed.

The DSL or a Deputy DSL will attempt to contact the parents through various methods, such as telephone or video call, or by contacting a relative in the first instance. If contact cannot be made or if the DSL or a Deputy DSL deems it necessary, we will undertake a home visit or ask an appropriate agency to do so. A risk assessment will be carried out before any such visit is made to ensure staff and the family are not put at risk.

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

### **Reporting concerns about children or staff**

The importance of all staff and volunteers acting immediately on any safeguarding concerns remains. Staff and volunteers will continue to follow our Child Protection procedures and advise the DSLs of any concerns they have about any pupil, including those who are not attending school. All concerns should be reported using MyConcern or via email to the DSL.

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 attending our school are dealt with thoroughly and efficiently and in accordance with our Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy.

### **Staff training and induction**

For the duration of the COVID-19 measures, our DSL and Deputy DSLs are unlikely to receive their refresher training. In line with government guidance, our trained DSLs and deputy DSLs will be

classed as trained even if they cannot receive this training. The DSL attended the statutory update training via Surrey Safeguarding Children's Board on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

All current school staff have received safeguarding training and have read Part One and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2020). All teaching staff have read this Annex to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

When new staff are recruited or volunteers join the School, they will receive a safeguarding induction in accordance with our Safeguarding (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 caused 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, we will continue to follow our Safer Recruitment Policy.

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 we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process set out in paragraphs 183 to 188 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 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 and security perspective that we are aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers are on our school site and that the appropriate checks have been carried out on those individuals. We will continue to maintain our single central record (SCR) during these measures to ensure we have this awareness.

### **Peer on peer abuse**

We recognise that children can abuse their peers and our 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. We also recognise that abuse can still occur whether or not a pupil is on site or taught at home.

Our staff will remain vigilant to the signs of peer on peer abuse and will follow the process set out in our Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy. Pupils can raise any concerns with any member of staff via email or via Tootoot.

## **Online safety**

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

Our staff will follow the process for online safety set out in our Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy and e-Safety Policy.

Staff who interact with children online will continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. If a staff member is concerned about a child, that staff member will follow the approach set out in this Annex and report that concern to the DSL and Deputy DSLs via MyConcern.

If staff are asking pupils to watch videos as part of a lesson or activity, they must have watched it first and in full to ensure that the content is appropriate.

## **Use of video and one to one situations online**

The nature of educating remotely does not change the principles of safeguarding nor the Staff Code of Conduct. However, the following procedures must be followed in the interests of safeguarding all members of the School community.

- The School's Acceptable User Policy still applies as do the Schools Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy for Pupils and Staff Code of Conduct.
- Only School email addresses and accounts should be used for digital communication.
- Communication between staff and pupils should be conducted via email or Microsoft Teams or Firefly.
- Pupils should not create Teams themselves and misuse of technology will not be tolerated.
- Recording of any online sessions must not take place without the express permission of all participants, making them aware of how long the recording will be kept and for what purposes they will be used. One to one video calls on Teams should not be recorded as the platform may automatically save them in a location which is accessible for others.
- If a member of staff needs to use other video conferencing platforms, for example Zoom, then this must be agreed in advance with Mr Gareth Hart and Mr Alex Balls. Reassurances will be needed about the justification to use such platforms, that security settings have been set appropriately and that consideration has been given to GDPR compliance.
- If video conferencing is to be used for groups within Teams, during lessons, within tutor groups, for assemblies and meetings, this is fine. The relevant Head of Department (for lessons) and Housemaster (for tutor sessions) should also be added to the Team so that they can join Meetings should they so wish. For House or Year Group Meetings, the relevant Head of Section (The Close, Middle School, Sixth Form) should be added. Should a Meeting be held outside of morning registration or a timetabled lesson, the relevant line manager should be informed in advance. At all times, consideration must be given to the location used for the conferencing and also to dress code, so that both are appropriate and do not compromise anyone.
- Should it be necessary to have a one to one video Meeting, the procedures and safeguards of the Staff Code of Conduct should be put in place to protect both the pupil from being vulnerable to harm and the adult from being vulnerable to unjust or unfounded allegations being made against them. To this end:

- Only use Teams for one to one video calls with pupils.
  - Ensure that meetings with children outside agreed working arrangements should not take place without the agreement of a senior managers and parents\*.
  - Assess the need to have other colleagues or a parent “present” or available, perhaps by giving them access to “drop into” or oversee/hear the Meeting.
  - The meeting should only be arranged by the member of staff, who will use the calendar function to arrange. It is advised that staff should not accept an ad hoc call from a pupil but should message the pupil and arrange a meeting as above.
  - Ensure that both teacher and pupil are in an appropriate venue to hold the meeting and are suitably attired.
  - Keep a log of all one to one video Meetings held.
  - Report any situation where a child becomes distressed or angry or where something which is felt may give rise to questioning to a senior colleague as soon as possible.
- \*counselling sessions may take place via Zoom, and as per normal a pupil may request that their parents are not informed.

### **New children at the school**

Children may join our school from other settings. When they do, we will seek from those settings the relevant welfare and child protection information as normal. This is relevant for all children that join us, but it will be especially important where children are vulnerable.

For vulnerable children we will ensure we understand the reasons for the vulnerability and any arrangements in place to support them. As a minimum 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 (and, for looked-after children, who the responsible Virtual School Head is).

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 ideally happen at DSL or Deputy DSL level, and likewise between special educational needs co-ordinators/named individual with oversight of SEN provision for children with EHC plans. However, it is acknowledged this may not always be possible. Where this is the case our school senior leaders will take responsibility.

The DSL will undertake a risk assessment based on the information received, considering how risks will be managed and which staff need to know the information.

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

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

ARWB

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