



## COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Springwood Heath Primary School

**Annex Date: April 2020**

### **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.

Across Liverpool it was agreed that the Local Authority would adopt a Hub model for providing care to the key groups of children of primary age. A number of school sites were identified to remain open, with all other schools closing. The Hubs are strategically located across the city and are staffed by members of staff from schools within their locality. Children needing care have been signposted to their nearest Hub, but parents are also free to choose the most convenient Hub location. Further information regarding the response by Liverpool City Council to COVID-19 can be found here:

<https://liverpool.gov.uk/communities-and-safety/emergency-planning/coronavirus/>

Springwood Heath Primary School is open and operating as a Hub for the local area.

The way Springwood Heath Primary School is currently operating in response to coronavirus is fundamentally different as a School Hub, however, our safeguarding principles in accordance with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE) 2019, remain the same:

- the best interests of children will always come first
- if anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act and act immediately
- a DSL or deputy DSL is available
- unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's working area and/or gain access to children

This addendum of the Springwood Heath Primary School Safeguarding and Child Protection policy contains details of any amendments to our existing safeguarding arrangements during this time, until school is instructed it can safely fully open again.

Springwood Heath Primary School Hub			
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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 (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.

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 offered a school 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 EHC plans can safely remain at home.

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

Our Senior Management Team, especially the Designated Safeguarding Leads (and deputies) know who our most vulnerable children are.

Springwood Heath Primary 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.

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 will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent. Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, the school and the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead**

Springwood Heath Hub will attempt to ensure there is always a trained DSL or deputy available on site. All safeguarding concerns should be reported **without delay** to the Hub's Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads. It is recognised however that this may not be possible and where this is the case, Springwood Hub will consider the following options:

- A trained DSL or deputy is available to be contacted via phone, email or video call when working from home
- Sharing trained DSLs or deputies from other schools, who would be available to contact via phone, email or video call.

If it is not possible to have a trained DSL or deputy on site, Springwood Heath Hub will ensure that there is a senior leader who takes responsibility for coordinating safeguarding on site. This senior leader can also take advice from School Improvement Liverpool's School Improvement Officers for Safeguarding:

[safeguarding@si.liverpool.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding@si.liverpool.gov.uk)

**Phil Cooper 07921 942091\***

**Nicola Noon 07793 660567\***

We will ensure that all staff are made aware of the arrangements on a daily basis regarding who the named Safeguarding lead person is and how to speak to them.

### **Safeguarding procedures**

Springwood Heath Hub follow the normal safeguarding operating procedures for managing an educational setting or school or childcare provider and will adhere to the Springwood Heath's own child protection, managing allegations policies and staff code of conduct.

Staff on rota will be made aware of children with specific safeguarding or health needs or disabilities.

Medicines will be stored and administered safely.

All staff will be informed of the fire evacuation procedures.

Everyone on site will know how to contact the Hub's Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputies and First Aiders. As much as is able there will always be appropriately trained key personnel on site. The names of these staff will be displayed and updated as required.

Springwood Heath Hub will follow normal [Local Safeguarding Children Board Procedures](#)

All safeguarding concerns should be reported **without delay** to Springwood Heath Hub's Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads.

If any member of staff believes a child is at risk of harm then the Designated Safeguarding Lead should ring **Liverpool Careline on 0151 233 3700, without delay**. If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is *unavailable* then **any** member of staff should ensure Liverpool Careline is contacted without delay.

**If a child is in immediate/imminent danger then staff should ring the police.**

### **Attendance monitoring**

Local Authorities and schools do not need to complete their usual day to day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance.

The DfE have devised an online for and supporting spreadsheet for the COVID-19 period. It can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings>

A daily online attendance form will be submitted to the DfE each day for all those children in attendance. This is to keep a record of children of critical workers and vulnerable children who are attending school. This allows a record for safeguarding purposes and ensures schools provide accurate, up to date data to the Department for Education on the number of children taking up places.

Each school's hub liaison officer will communicate the method for submitting attendance data for prioritised vulnerable children to the Local Authority.

Springwood Heath Hub will follow up with any parents/carers or social workers who have arranged care for their child but their child subsequently does not attend. In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up a place at Springwood Heath Hub, and was expected to, the social worker will be informed.

### **Children moving between schools and Hubs**

Where it is identified that a child from Springwood Heath Primary School is attending another Hub/school setting, we will share relevant welfare and child protection information with the DSL for that Hub. The receiving Hub/school should be aware of the reason the child is vulnerable and the arrangements in place to support them. As a minimum, we will share the child's EHC Plan, Child in Need plan, Child Protection Plan or for looked after children, their personal education plan. The name of the child's social worker will also be shared. We

intend that this will happen prior to the child arriving in the new setting but where that is not possible, we will share as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Schools must have appropriate regard to data protection and GDPR, but this does not prevent sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

## **Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff**

In order to support the running of the Springwood Heath Hub, members of staff from outside of our workforce may temporarily move to work within our setting. Where they engage in regulated activity as part of their normal work and they already have the appropriate Enhanced DBS with Barred List check, there is no expectation that a new check will be applied for. The type of setting on a DBS check, e.g. a specific category of school, is not a barrier. We will risk assess each situation and we will satisfy ourselves that each person in our setting has had the required level of checks. We will seek written assurance from the individual's current employer as opposed to undertaking new checks.

The Hub Centre Manager/Headteacher will ensure that:

Each member of staff presents with their employee photo ID and either one of the following:

1. Their original Enhanced DBS Certificate confirming a children's barred list check has been undertaken
2. Written confirmation from their employer that an Enhanced DBS Certificate with a children's barred list check has been undertaken. (This is to be the likely mechanism for all staff provided by other schools, LA, SIL and LLP)

Photo ID only is required for supervised visitors and also for Police, Health and Children's Services.

It is essential from a safeguarding perspective that we are aware, on any given day, which staff or volunteers will be on site and that the appropriate checks have been carried out.

As such, we will continue to keep our Single Central Record (SCR) up to date.

We will use our SCR to record all those working or volunteering, including those who are temporarily working there from other settings. The SCR can also log details of any risk assessments carried out on staff and volunteers on loan from elsewhere. A template for these checks is included in the Hub centre managers handbook.

Springwood Heath Hub 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 (as per paragraph 163 of Keeping Children Safe in Education)

Springwood Heath Hub will also continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (as per paragraph 166 of Keeping Children Safe in Education). During the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing [Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk).

## **Online safety**

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 the Child Protection Policy addendum. Where necessary, referrals will be made to LADO, children's social care and as required, the police. Springwood Heath Primary School Hub 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

### **Children and online safety away from school**

It is important that all staff who interacts 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 Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police. Springwood Heath Primary School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Our school will also be in contact with parents and carers during this time. Parents/carers will be encouraged to ensure children are appropriately supervised online and that appropriate parent controls are implemented

Our communication with parents will reinforce the importance of children being safe online. Families will be made aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and who their child is going to be interacting with online, including members of staff from our school.

We acknowledge that some parents and carers may choose to supplement the school's online offer with support from online companies and in some cases, individual tutors. We will raise awareness with parents the importance of only accessing online support from a reputable organisation or individual who can provide evidence that they are a safe organisation and can be trusted to have access to children. Further information on online safety can be found on our schools website.

NCA-CEOP: [www.thinkuknow.co.uk/](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/)

Internet Matters: [www.internetmatters.org/](http://www.internetmatters.org/)

Childnet: [www.childnet.com/blog/keeping-children-happy-and-safe-online-during-covid-19](http://www.childnet.com/blog/keeping-children-happy-and-safe-online-during-covid-19)

UK Safer Internet Centre: [www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/working-remotely-advice-professionalsparents-posh-rhc](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/working-remotely-advice-professionalsparents-posh-rhc)

NSPCC: [www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/)

Parent Info: <https://parentinfo.org/>

BBC Own it: [www.bbc.com/ownit](http://www.bbc.com/ownit)

### **Operation Encompass**

When we receive an operation encompass notification relating to a pupil at our school, during the COVID-19 period, our response may be different to normal. If the subject of the notification remains in attendance at our Hub, we will follow our usual procedures. If the child is in attendance at an alternative Hub/school, we will securely share the information with the DSL for that setting. If the child is not attending any setting and is being cared for at home, we will risk assess the situation taking into consideration the history of the child and family. This information will be used in order to determine our response to each individual case. In all situations we would always aim to speak to the child.

### **Peer on peer abuse**

We recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims. Where we receive a report of peer on peer abuse, we will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within our main Child Protection policy. We will listen and work with the young person,

parents/carers and any multi-agency partner required ensuring the safety and security of that young person. Concerns and actions will be recorded using the agreed methods and appropriate referrals made.

## **Mental Health**

It is acknowledged that the current circumstances surrounding COVID-19 are particularly stressful and may cause increased anxieties and stress for all members of our school community. When children and staff are away from their usual routine and social contact, this can become a negative and stressful experience. Springwood Heath primary will ensure there is appropriate support available for the whole school community at this time. Support can include existing provision in the school, or from specialist staff or support services. Where children of critical workers and vulnerable children continue to attend the setting, appropriate support will be offered to them whilst on site.

The school community can also be signposted to the government's advice on supporting children and young people's mental health during the COVID-19 outbreak, available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

Staffs at Springwood Heath Primary are aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

During this period of uncertainty we will ensure we care for children of Key Workers and vulnerable children on site and ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

## **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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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-educationalsettings](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educationalsettings)