



## 1. 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.

This addendum of the Seckford Education Trust Safeguarding, and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements during this time.

## 2. Key Contacts

SET School	Designated Safeguarding Lead	Phone	Email
Beccles	Shona Power	07739752397	<a href="mailto:spower@seckfordeducation.org.uk">spower@seckfordeducation.org.uk</a>
Ixworth	Henry Popham-Cooper		<a href="mailto:HPophamCooper@seckfordeducation.org.uk">HPophamCooper@seckfordeducation.org.uk</a>
Saxmundham	Sarah Marsden	07739752391	<a href="mailto:smarsden@seckfordeducation.org.uk">smarsden@seckfordeducation.org.uk</a>
Causton Juniors	Helen Brunning	07713093692	<a href="mailto:hbrunning@maidstoneandcauston.org">hbrunning@maidstoneandcauston.org</a>
Maidstone Infants	Helen Brunning	07713093692	<a href="mailto:hbrunning@maidstoneandcauston.org">hbrunning@maidstoneandcauston.org</a>

## 3. 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 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 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.

Senior Leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Assistant Designated Safeguarding Lead) 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.

All Seckford Education Trust 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. The lead person for this will be the named person above for each school.

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 name will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent. Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19, school or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

All Seckford Education Trust schools will liaise with parents or carers of our vulnerable children and young people to ensure that they continue to be aware of the offer that remains open to them. Where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, the school will notify their social worker.

#### 4. Designated Safeguarding Lead

There will be a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Assistant Designated Safeguarding Lead (ADSL) available during school hours every day. They are contactable on the details at the start of the policy.

Where there is a safeguarding issue on school site either the DSL or an ADSL will be available to travel into school to deal with the issue.

It is important that all school staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or ADSL). Staff on site will be made aware of 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

Staff in school should be informed of the current reporting process if that differs to the normal way of working. This information should be shared regularly with staff to ensure that they are up to date and informed of the process.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

## 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 join one of our educational settings, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

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

For movement within the Trust, schools should seek assurance from the Seckford Education Trust HR Manager that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training. Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the receiving setting's child protection policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

## 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,

Seckford Education Trust 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 Seckford Education Trust 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.

Seckford Education Trust 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.

We 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](mailto: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 or college, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, all schools within the Trust will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

## 8. Children and online safety away from School

It is important that all staff who interact 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 by the DSL or ADSL within the school setting.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the Trust's code of conduct. Seckford Education Trust will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements. Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- No 1:1s, groups only
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.

- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred.
- The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms provided by Seckford Education Trust to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

## 9. Supporting children not in School

Seckford Education Trust is 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. This will be arranged and led in each school by the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will work with the pastoral team and form tutors to ensure that this communication takes place and is logged.

Details of this plan must be recorded electronically, as should a record of contact that has been made. The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded. Seckford Education Trust schools and their DSL's 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. This plan should be available to share with Headteachers, Heads of School and the Trust systems leadership Safeguarding Lead and should be checked by these persons.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages as well as through the bulletins.

We recognise 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 school name need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home. As a Trust we 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.

## 10. Supporting children in School

Seckford Education Trust is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students. Each school will continue to be a safe space for children to attend and flourish.

The Headteacher or Head of School will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

Schools within the Trust 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. We 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.

## 11. Peer on Peer Abuse

Seckford Education Trust 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 in line with the Trust's safeguarding recording process.

## 12. Complaints and Compliance

Any complaints about this policy from outside the Trust should be made in accordance with the Trust's Complaints Policy. Any other complaints should be brought to the attention of the Chair of the Trust Leadership Group in the first instance.

Complaints that are in the public interest and relate to suspected malpractice may be appropriate to raise under the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy.

The Trust will review this policy annually and ensure that practice across the Trust and all Schools is in line with this policy. Any review will take into account the most up-to-date legislation and statutory guidance.

The Trust has identified a range of Assurance Methodologies as tools by which compliance with policies can be tested. Those most relevant to this policy include:

- Internal audit through Systems Leadership process
- External audit
- Local Advisory Board Member visits
- Random testing by line managers