



## Whitehouse Primary School: COVID-19 Arrangements for Dealing with Vulnerable Children during School Closure (from 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020)

### 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. 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. This addendum of the Whitehouse Primary School Safeguarding, and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

- Vulnerable children
- Attendance monitoring
- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Reporting a concern
- Safeguarding Training and induction
- Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff
- Online safety in schools and colleges
- Children and online safety away from school and college
- Supporting children not in school
- Supporting children in school
- Peer on Peer Abuse

### Key Contacts

Role	Name	Contact Number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Ms R Woods	07561167808	rachel.woods@whitehouseprimary.org.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Miss K Ogden		kieran.orgden@ntlp.org.uk
Chair of Governors	Mr D Rogers		dudrogers@hotmail.co.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 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 deputy) 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.

Whitehouse 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.

The lead person for this will be: Ms R Woods.

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 Whitehouse Primary School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, Whitehouse Primary School or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Whitehouse Primary School will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed. 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. Whitehouse Primary School and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – Whitehouse Primary School will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not.

Whitehouse Primary School will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend. To support this, Whitehouse Primary School will, when communicating with parents/carers and carers, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school and the reasons are not known, or discontinues, Whitehouse Primary School will notify their social worker.

### **Designated Safeguarding Staff**

Ideally, the DSL or deputy will be available on site if children are attending school. If children are not on-site the DSL will be available to be contacted via phone. Arrangements will be made for accessing and up-dating the CPOMS system and liaising with Front Door as necessary. All staff will have access to the DSL or DDSL each day. If practical, the DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

### **Reporting a Concern**

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding Policy, this includes making a report via CPOMS, which can be done remotely. In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This will ensure that the concern is received.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay. Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should raise the concern with the headteacher. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the headteacher. Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Mr D Rogers.

### **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 enter Whitehouse Primary School, 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.

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.

### **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, Whitehouse Primary School 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 Whitehouse Primary School 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 that has not been subject to checks be left alone with children.

Whitehouse Primary School will continue to follow the legal duty of care to refer to the DBS anyone that has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child. Full details can be found at paragraph 167 of KCSIE.

Whitehouse Primary School will continue to make referrals to the Teacher Regulatory Authority in accordance with paragraph 166 of KCSIE. during the period of COVID-19 referrals should be made by email to: [Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk)

Whilst acknowledging the current national emergency it is important that, for safeguarding, the school is aware of which teachers, staff and volunteers are in the school on a day-to-day basis and that appropriate checks have been carried out. As such, Whitehouse Primary School will continue to maintain a Single Central Record.

### **On-line Safety**

The school will continue to provide safe on-line environment in school. Outside of school, it is important that parents and staff continue to monitor for signs that a child might be at risk. any concerns should be reported as per the existing child protection policy. where appropriate, referrals should be made via Front Door or to the police. Whitehouse Primary School has considered the following things when setting up on-line learning resources:

- No 1-2-1 groups only
- Everyone must be wearing suitable clothing is using webinar technology
- Computers must be in a public space, not in a bedroom and backgrounds need to be blurred
- If teaching a live class, it should be recorded and kept to the minimum length of time.
- Language must be appropriate and professional – this includes all family members that may be in the background
- Staff must only use the NTLP Platform to communicate with pupils
- If appropriate, staff should record the length, date, time and names of any pupils involved in the session.

### **Supporting Pupils not in School**

Whitehouse Primary School is committed to the safeguarding and wellbeing of all it's pupils. Where a pupil is considered vulnerable a robust communication plan will be put in place. The plan can include remote and telephone contact. Given the current restrictions on home visits and social distancing home visits will not be undertaken at this time. Plans will be reviewed at least fortnightly.

The school will share safeguarding messages via Twitter (@whitehouseps), the school website [www.whitehouseprimary.org.uk](http://www.whitehouseprimary.org.uk) and via text messages, SeeSaw and Tapestry.

We recognise that the school is a safe environment for our pupils and, teachers will consider pupil mental health and wellbeing when setting work for home learning.

We will ensure that children of key workers are sufficiently supported at home.

### **Supporting Children in School**

We are committed to the safeguarding and well-being of all pupils and staff. If it is appropriate for children to be in school we will ensure that staffing ratios are in line with Government guidance, that advice from Public Health England is adhered to.

**Peer on Peer Abuse**

During this national emergency we may need to revise our procedure for dealing with peer-on-peer abuse, how we report it and support the victims.

If we received a report of peer-on-peer abuse we will follow the principles outlined in Section 5 of KCSIE 2019 and our published Child Protection Policy.

We will work with all those involved to resolve the situation and record the outcome on CPOMS.