



RIDGEWOOD
SCHOOL

COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Ridgewood School

School Name: Ridgewood School

Policy owner: Jordanna Proctor

Date: 31.3.20

Date shared with staff: 31.3.20

Safeguarding priority

During these challenging times the safeguarding of all children at our school – 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 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 children
- children should continue to be protected when they are online.

This addendum of Ridgwood Shool Safeguarding, and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

1. Context.....	<i>Error! Bookmark not defined.</i>
3. Vulnerable children.....	4
4. Attendance monitoring.....	5
5. Designated Safeguarding Lead	6
6. Reporting a concern	6
7. Safeguarding Training and induction.....	7
8. Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff	7
9. Online safety in schools and colleges	8
10. Children and online safety away from school and college	8
11. Supporting children not in school.....	9
12. Supporting children in school	9
13. Peer on Peer Abuse	10

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.

2. 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.

All students with an EHC plan have been offered a school place, and their parents have decided whether they need to continue to be offered a 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 are able to safely remain at home.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself has not been 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.

Ridgewood 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: Jordanna Proctor and Rachel Pearson.

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 Ridgewood 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 social worker will talk through these anxieties with them following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Ridgewood School will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school where it is felt necessary to do so.

3. 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.

Ridgewood School and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school or remain at home safely. School will then follow up on any student that they were expecting to attend, who does not. Ridgewood School will also follow up with any parent who has arranged a school place for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently does not attend.

To support the above, the safeguarding team will, when communicating with parents/carers on a weekly basis, 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, or discontinues, Ridgewood School will notify their social worker and continue to carry out weekly welfare calls to the parent/ carer of the young person.

4. Designated Safeguarding Lead

Ridgewood school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: **Jordanna Proctor**

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: **Tricia Fullerton and Nicole Walker**

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or email - for example when working from home.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a Senior Leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site and contacting the DSL if necessary.

When DSLs are working remotely this might include updating and managing access to child protection online management system, CPOMS and liaising with the other DSL (or deputy) and as required liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school or college.

It is important that all Ridgewood staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to speak to them. The Senior Leader present on site each day will further support with the co-ordination of this process.

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

5. 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 and Headteacher to tell them they have a concern. The DSL will arrange an immediate phone call to discuss this. This will ensure that the concern is received. 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, DSLs (or deputy) who have 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 has communicated with staff the 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 Ridgewood School, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction. It is highly unlikely that any new staff/volunteers will be inducted whilst there remains a threat of the COVID19 virus.

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.

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, Ridgewood 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.

Ridgewood School 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.

Ridgewood School 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 will be made by emailing Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current National emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that our school is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, Ridgewood School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

8. Online safety in schools and colleges

Ridgewood School 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. 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 Child Protection 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 normal safeguarding routines and report that concern on CPOMS.

9. Children and online safety away from school and college

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs that a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be reported via CPOMS and will be dealt with as per the Child Protection Policy. Where appropriate referrals will still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

Ridgewood School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

10. Supporting children not in school

Ridgewood School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people. Where we have identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or those who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, we have ensured that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person. Details of this plan will be recorded on CPOMS, should a record of contact have made.

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

Ridgewood School and its DSLs 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.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and provide regular parental updates.

Ridgewood School recognises 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 Ridgewood School are aware of this in setting expectations of students' work where they are at home.

Ridgewood School 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. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded on CPOMS.

11. Supporting children in school

Ridgewood School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

Ridgewood School will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

Ridgewood School 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 COVID19.

Ridgewood School 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. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded on CPOMS.

Where Ridgewood School has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – we will discuss them immediately with the Governing Body.

12. Peer on Peer Abuse

Ridgewood School recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of peer on peer 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 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 on CPOMS and appropriate referrals made.