



HOLMEWOOD HOUSE SCHOOL

Safeguarding Policy Addendum 4 in response to COVID-19 and changes in working practice

On 4th January 2021 parents were asked to keep their children at home once again, wherever possible, as part of the response to COVID-19. Access to the Holmeewood House school site is now restricted and learning continues for all pupils online. The school is open to 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. While we are operating differently, our safeguarding principles remain the same. The school Safeguarding and Child Protection policy continue to outline the expectations for all staff in line with government and ISI guidance, including KCSIE 2020.

The key principles of our Safeguarding Policy remain in place for all staff and pupils whether working at school, remotely or in **our critical** worker provision:

- The welfare of the child is paramount and the school is a safe environment for all
- Staff should act immediately over any concerns
- Online safety remains a high priority for pupils and staff
- The DSL or a deputy should be available for pupils, staff and parents to report or discuss concerns and all staff must be aware of the mechanism for contacting the DSL
- **Children will continue to be protected online**
- Safer recruitment procedures continue to be applied

This addendum to the main policy **highlights changes to practice or where additional emphasis is needed** to ensure the safeguarding and welfare of staff, pupils and parents. **It should be read alongside our existing policies and procedures.**

Risk Assessments

Continuing our focus on pupil, staff and parent safety and well-being, all risk assessments for use of the school buildings must link the Health & Safety procedures with Safeguarding policies. Risk assessments should underpin the procedures for identifying and mitigating risk and include regular reviews of current practice.

The current school Covid-19 RA remains a live document. **All staff must be made aware of and read the most recent version.** Government guidelines must be adhered to at all times and used to inform practices and procedures. Staff must be informed of changes to Health & Safety and Safeguarding practices.

The school will continue to keep up to date and act in accordance with the government guidance regarding education provision during the coronavirus outbreak:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/education-and-childcare>

Reporting safeguarding concerns

Staff should be open to the possibility that new safeguarding issues may be identified as a result of lockdown, and that usual school referral procedures must be followed when addressing these.

All staff and volunteers have access to our Safeguarding team:

DSL – on site	Mr Chris Murray	chris.murray@holmewoodhouse.co.uk
Deputy DSL - on site	Mr Kevin O’Riordan	koriordan@holmewoodhouse.co.uk
Deputy DSL	Mrs Kate Spoor	kspoor@holmewoodhouse.co.uk
Deputy DSL	Mr Richard Thorley	rthorley@holmewoodhouse.co.uk
Deputy DSL	Ms Antoinette Faure	afaure@holmewoodhouse.co.uk
Safeguarding Governor	Ms Anne Wakefield	awakefield@holmewoodhouse.co.uk

- The DSL or a Deputy will be present on site.
- All concerns must be reported as soon as possible to the DSL or deputy via phone 01892 860000 or Teams video call .
- Up to date details of the DSL / Deputy will be visible to staff and children.
- Recording information can take place in the usual way using **The Green Form** and passed to the DSL.
- Pupils are encouraged to report safeguarding concerns to a member of staff or a trusted adult at home.
- Parents are encouraged to report concerns via existing systems as outlined in our Child Protection policy.
- Where staff are concerned about an adult working with pupils, they should report the concern to the Headmaster.
- Regular meetings will continue to be held by the Safeguarding and **pastoral teams** to raise issues surrounding the care and safety of pupils including online safety.
- DSLs should provide support to pupils who are not currently in school. Where necessary this includes speaking directly to those pupils and helping identify any concerns,
- Referrals to the Kent Safeguarding Children Board via the Front Door continue to be made in the usual way.
- The DSL/Deputy will continue to engage with social workers and attend all multi-agency meetings remotely.
- Prevent is a vital part of our work to safeguard children from radicalising influences; the school will continue to follow local processes where we have concerns during this challenging time.
- DSLs must keep abreast of any changes to the Government guidelines and local referral processes as indicated by The Education People.

Kent Education Safeguarding Service:

Tunbridge Wells Education Children’s services: 03000 412284
Integrated Front Door: 03000 411111 (outside office hours 03000 419191)
Early Help Contacts (district teams) can be found on www.kelsi.org.uk

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) deals with allegations against staff who work with children either in education or the wider workforce.

To contact the LADO Team please call 03000 41 08 88 or email kentchildrenslado@kent.gov.uk

Policies & Codes of conduct

Staff should be aware of and follow our existing **staff code of conduct** and any addendum updates to safer working practice, both on and off the site.

In particular, all staff must be familiar with the following policies which can be accessed from the remote H drive and 365Sharepoint Safeguarding file:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection (including this addendum 4 re COVID19 working practices)
- Acceptable Use of IT (including additional requirements relating to remote working and BYOD)
- Social media policy
- Taking, using and storing images of children
- Data protection protocol
- Returning to Work Safely – procedures to follow for all staff, pupils and parents
- Risk Assessments, in particular COVID-19 RA

Staff training and Induction

- DSLs will continue to access appropriate training (including remotely) and other additional resources to ensure they are up to date with local and national guidance.
- All existing staff have read KCSIE 2020 Part I and accessed safeguarding training.
- Staff will continue to receive regular safeguarding updates and in particular will be made aware if any processes have changed.
- All new staff will have an induction provided via the DSL and will be provided with a copy of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and this addendum.

Acceptable Use Policies (Codes of conduct for working remotely and BYOD)

- The use of any use of online learning tools and systems must be in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements. Only school approved platforms, Microsoft 365, Teams and Zoom video conferencing, should be used for remote and school-based learning and learning. This does not include WhatsApp.
- Pupils who bring their own devices for use with the school IT system must understand and follow the acceptable use procedures at all times.
- Online resources must be checked in full to ensure suitability of content /age appropriateness, before sharing with pupils; watch the video / powerpoint to the end not just the first few moments.
- Staff should not enter into 1-1 sessions or communication with individual pupils without following procedures set out in AUP for remote learning.
- **PrePrep teachers** are, occasionally offering short 1 to 1 zoom lessons (for example phonics or maths) for children who struggle with the whole group on zoom. At this age group it can be tricky for some children to concentrate and engage in a whole group session, but 1 to 1 can be effective for the child's learning. In this instance a parent is asked to remain in the room and the zoom session is recorded and uploaded to the school system.
- Images of children must be stored in accordance with school policy. Any recordings of lessons via Zoom must be uploaded to the **school approved One Drive** following the session.

Peer on Peer abuse

- All staff should be aware of the signs of peer on peer abuse and be equipped to tackle incidents or disagreements between pupils even though they are not in the physical classroom environment. (refer to KCSIE 2020)
- Staff should be aware that any online bullying is potentially a safeguarding issue.

- All pupils must be taught how they can access support and who they can turn to if they have a concern. The first port of call is likely to be the form teacher, further support can be sought from the Head of Section and also from Nicky Stewart or Su Xavier.
- At a time when pupils feel more anxious and less secure of their boundaries, staff should continue to reinforce positive interactions and expect high levels of mutual respect.
- All pupils should be regularly reminded of the code of conduct for acceptable use, including the additional expectations surrounding live sessions, and protocols for sharing pictures and video-clips between pupils and teachers. **These must be shared during the first form time of the term and regular reminders given during the term.**
- Some pupils may push the class code of conduct further in the absence of a physical teacher and staff need to ensure fair and equitable behaviour in the virtual learning space.
- Greater time may need to be spent encouraging pupils to speak up and contribute to remote learning sessions while others may benefit more from using a channelled approach.
- Sensitivity needs to be given to pupils who may not return to the classroom even though their year group is back in school due to home circumstances or shielding of vulnerable parents or siblings.

Online Safety

- Holmewood House will ensure any remote sharing of information, communication and use of online learning tools and systems will be in line with privacy and data protection requirements.
- All communication will take place via school approved communication channels: school emails, Microsoft 365 and Zoom.
- Staff must do all they reasonably can to keep children safe online at home as well as at school.
- Parents will be made aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access. Holmewood House will be clear who from the school their child is going to be interacting with online.
- Pupils should know and be reminded, whom they can contact for help and support, whether pastoral or academic, as well as how to report any concerns, including online bullying.
- Pupils who are working online should have very clear reporting routes in place so they can raise any concerns whilst online. These must be shared with pupils at the beginning of each half term.
- At a time of increased internet net use, staff need to be aware of the online safety recommendations for each age group.
- Appropriate filtering and monitoring will continue to be implemented as outlined in the Holmewood House Safeguarding Policy.
- Regular reinforcement of online safety and promoting positive working habits e.g. consider the effects of pupils being isolated on their computers for several hours, should form part of the continuing curriculum.
- As well as reporting routes back to the school, this should also signpost children to age appropriate practical support from, for example:
 - Childline
 - UK Safer Internet Centre - to report and remove harmful online content
 - CEOP - for advice on making a report about online abuse
- Specific mention should be made of increased social media pressure on pupils at this time. The following sites are recommended:

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/helpline/professionals-online-safety-helpline>

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk>

<https://www.childnet.com/resources/the-adventures-of-kara-winston-and-the-smart-crew>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

- Staff should continue to emphasise the importance of securing online support from a reputable organisation/individual who can provide evidence that they are safe and can be trusted to have access to children.

Support for parents

- Parents will be made aware of the safeguarding arrangements that have been put in place during the period of remote learning. These will be available on the website and the school portal.
- Parents will be encouraged to ensure children are appropriately supervised online and that appropriate parental controls are implemented at home.
- For **Pre Prep pupils**, parents are asked to remain in the room with the children whilst they are on zoom; this might be sitting nearby or be pottering around in the background.
- At a time of heightened anxiety but also given that pupils will have greater freedom to being online to be online, parents may need further guidance about helping their children remain safe online. To help with this the following sites are recommended for information and support:
 - Internet matters
 - London Grid for Learning
 - Net-aware - for support for parents and careers from the NSPCC
 - Thinkuknow - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
 - UK Safer Internet Centre - advice for parents and carers

Vulnerable children

- DSLs and form teachers have an important role in supporting all families but especially those with more vulnerable children. This will be especially important during the COVID-19 period.
- Staff should continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children.
- Attendance at school is particularly important for children with a social worker, EHCP or who are considered vulnerable. This may be via access to Key worker provision or a return to the school setting.
- Communication is key – 3 x weekly contact is expected for all families and follow up where necessary is advised.
- While there needs to be a balance between positive enquiry and checking up, parents must be able to access support in the best way for them and their family circumstances. Staff need to be sensitive to the fact that these may change over the course of the summer months.
- Families needing further support should be discussed with the Head of Section and a plan agreed for continuing support so that these children do not fall through the safeguarding net at such a busy time.
- Schools should be able to identify and support pupils not in school and phone calls may prove to be a quicker and more effective way to remain in contact and help continue the personal connections already made with families, including providing support from specialist staff or services.
- Sharing information between form teachers and DSLs remains critical and this may be best achieved through zoom style meeting as well as passing on information via The Green form and emails.
- Where pupils change school during this time all usual procedures for information sharing should continue to take place. This is particularly important where safeguarding concerns have arisen or EHC plans are in place.

Supporting Wellbeing

The wellbeing of staff, pupils and all the Holmewood families is a high priority at this unprecedented and stressful time.

- A guide for staff to help address pastoral concerns has been written by Nicky Stewart: The Return to School – pastoral considerations
- Teachers should be aware of the impact of current circumstances on mental health of those pupils who are continuing to work from home, including when setting expectations of pupil's work.
- Respect for work life balance in all families and households should be considered and this may require additional patience and flexibility from all sides.
- Clarity in communication will help keep all informed while reducing email traffic will ensure the important messages get through.
- Where there may be additional stress due to illness or uncertainty, a supportive approach which can offer help or sign post further assistance will be most effective.
- Specific guidance regarding wellbeing and support for bereavement may be found on Sharepoint.
- Su Xavier remains a point of contact for staff and parents regarding questions around coronavirus and welfare: sxavier@holmewoodhouse.co.uk

Safer Recruitment

- All safer recruitment procedures must continue to be followed in line with KCSIE 2020.
- 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.
- No new DBS checks will be required for staff shielding or on furlough.
- Any newly appointed staff, and supply teaching staff must follow current induction processes including all safeguarding and child protection procedures

Site Access

- Access to school site is restricted to all but staff who are required to work and cannot work from home; specific parts of the site are open based on a risk assessed approach.
- Parents and visitors are not allowed to enter any building.
- Staff must adhere to all risk assessments including the current COVID-19 RA, and be aware of the responsive nature of these. Make sure you are up to date with the school procedures.
- Staff who wish to be onsite at any point during the week must book in for and take a test on the Monday of that week. Full details from CM and SX
- Staff must wear their identity pass at all times.
- Staff must wear masks in all communal areas.
- Staff must actively follow social distancing and good hand washing discipline.
- The site will be locked and staff should use their security passes to access buildings.
- Academic staff should leave promptly so cleaning and securing/locking of the site can take place.
- For enquiries relating to these arrangements regarding the school site please contact:
Estates Manager: arandall@holmewoodhouse.co.uk
Bursar: edixperkin@holmewoodhouse.co.uk