



Child Protection Policy addendum during Covid-19

The way Yewstock School is currently operating in response to coronavirus (COVID-19) is fundamentally different to business as usual, however, a number of important safeguarding principles remain the same:

- with regard to safeguarding, the best interests of ALL children always continue to come first
- if anyone in school or college has a safeguarding concern about any child they will continue to act and act immediately
- a DSL or Deputy DSL is always available
- unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children
- children continue to be protected when they are online at school and advice is sent home

Yewstock School continues to have an effective child protection policy in place reflecting business as usual. Yewstock School takes on any updated advice received from the local safeguarding partners, including updated advice received from local authorities regarding children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need.

Staff continue to use My Concern if they have any concerns about a child. They act immediately on any safeguarding concerns.

There is always the DSL or a Deputy DSL on site when school is open.

The staff understand the importance of 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 staff will report any peer on peer abuse and where possible, advise parents what to do if this happens away from the school site.



Staff will continue to report any concerns about a staff member who may pose a safeguarding risk to children.

Designated safeguarding leads (DSLs)

There is always a trained DSL or Deputy DSL available on site, except for a self-isolating situation. In this case, a trained DSL or Deputy DSL can be made available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example working from home.

Where a trained DSL or Deputy DSL is not on site, in addition to the above options, a senior member of staff will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site. This might include updating and managing access to child protection files, liaising with the offsite DSL (or Deputy DSL) 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.

All school and college staff will have access to a trained DSL or Deputy DSL and know on any given day who that person is and how to speak to them.

Vulnerable children

In general, any child or young person up to 25 with an EHCP can be classed as 'vulnerable'. However, the DfE states that there is no set definition as there are very specific reasons a child/young person can be classed as vulnerable based on individual circumstances. Headteachers use data from their school communities along with individual student information to make judgements about who is considered vulnerable.

Although all of our students have a degree of vulnerability, some require further support from schools and could be considered to have an additional vulnerability. For the purposes of making this distinction, we define 'vulnerable' to mean any student who, as a result of cognitive delay or disability, physical disability, or social, emotional or mental health difficulties is unable to safeguard his or her personal welfare or who may be unable to protect him/herself against significant harm or exploitation and are safest when in school. In addition, children who are recognised as Children in Need, children on Child Protection Plans or children under the care of the local authority



(Looked After and Previously Looked After Children) are considered to have an additional vulnerability.

Local authorities have the key day-to-day responsibility for delivery of children's social care. Social workers and VSHs will continue to work with vulnerable children in this difficult period and should support these children to access this provision. Ideally, children with a social worker will attend school, unless in consultation with the child's social worker and/or family it is agreed this is not in the best interests of the child for example, in order to stop the spread of infection.

The DSL (and Deputy DSLs) know who their most vulnerable children are and have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edges of receiving children's social care support.

School and college staff should continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This will be especially important during the COVID-19 period.

Attendance

Local authorities and schools need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance. Yewstock School and social workers will agree with families whether children in need should be attending education provision – and the school will then follow up on any child that they were expecting to attend, who does not. School will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their children and the children subsequently do not attend. To support the above, Yewstock School will take the opportunity when communicating with parents and carers to 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 college, or discontinues, the school will notify their social worker.

The Department for Education has introduced a daily online attendance tracker to keep a record of vulnerable children who are attending school. This allows for a record of attendance for safeguarding purposes and allows schools to provide accurate, up-to-date data to the department on the number of vulnerable children attending school daily.



Staff training and safeguarding induction

All school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of KCSIE (September 2020) and are updated regularly with new and changing safeguarding information.

Children moving schools and colleges

It will be important for any children who are attending another setting, that Yewstock School's DSL (or Deputy DSLs) will provide the receiving institution with any relevant welfare and child protection information. This will be especially important where children are vulnerable. For Looked After children, any change in school will be led and managed by the VSH with responsibility for the child. The receiving institution should be aware of the reason the child is vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them. The receiving institution should, as appropriate, have access to a vulnerable child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or, for Looked After children, their personal education plan and know who the child's social worker (and, for Looked After children, who the responsible VSH is). This should ideally happen before a child arrives and, where that is not possible as soon as reasonably practicable. Any exchanges of information will ideally happen at DSL (or Deputy DSL) level, and likewise between special educational needs co-ordinators/named individual with oversight of SEN provision for children with EHC plans. However, it is acknowledged this may not always be possible. Where this is the case senior leaders should take responsibility.

Whilst schools and colleges must continue to have appropriate regard to data protection and GDPR they do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Further advice about information sharing can be found at paragraphs 76-83 of KCSIE.

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. If Yewstock Schools needs to recruit new staff, it will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of 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. There is no intention to take on volunteers, but should this become absolutely necessary under no circumstances would a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Regarding members of the school workforce already engaging in regulated activity and who already have the appropriate DBS check, there is no expectation that a new DBS check should be obtained where that member of the workforce temporarily moves to another school or college to support the care of children. The type of setting on the DBS check, for example a specific category of school, is not a barrier. The same principle applies if childcare workers move to work temporarily in a school setting. The receiving institution should risk assess as they would for a volunteer. Whilst the onus remains on schools and colleges to satisfy themselves that someone in their setting has had the required checks, including as required those set out in part 3 of KCSIE, in the above scenario this can be achieved, if the receiving institution chooses to, via seeking assurance from the current employer rather than requiring new checks.

Schools must continue to follow their 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.

Schools and colleges should 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. All referrals received by the TRA will continue to be considered. Where referrals on serious safeguarding matters are received and it is deemed that there is a public interest in doing so consideration will be given as to whether an interim prohibition order (IPO) should be put in place. The TRA will continue to progress all cases but will not schedule any hearings at the current time.

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current environment, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that school is aware, on any given day, which staff will be in the school or college, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone



engaging in regulated activity. As such, Yewstock will keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE. The SCR can, if a school or college chooses, provide the means to log everyone that will be working in a school or college on any given day, including any staff who may be on loan from other institutions.

Mental health

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents or carers. Teachers are aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home. The Department for Education is providing separate guidance on providing education remotely.

Where they are providing for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, Yewstock School will ensure appropriate support is in place for them. Support for pupils and students in the current circumstances can include existing provision in the school (although this may be delivered in different ways, for example over the phone) or from specialist staff or support services. Teachers at Yewstock School will send out links and information to parents and carers.

Online safety in schools and colleges

It will be more important than ever that school provides a safe environment, including online. Yewstock School will continue to ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect children when they are online on the school IT systems or recommended resources. Yewstock School may have to use external services such as the local authority, or close down IT systems if IT staff become unavailable.

The UK Council for Internet Safety provides information to help governing boards and proprietors assure themselves that any new arrangements continue to effectively safeguard children online.

The UK Safer Internet Centre's professional online safety helpline also provides support for the children's workforce with any online safety issues they face.



Children and online safety away from school and college

Yewstock School will continue doing what it reasonably can to keep all of their children safe. In most cases, the majority of children will be physically attending the school or college. 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 referrals will still be made to children's social care and as required by the police.

The Department for Education is providing separate guidance on providing education remotely; this includes the use of technology. Recently published guidance from the UK Safer Internet Centre on safe remote learning and from the London Grid for Learning on the use of videos and livestreaming will help plan online lessons and/or activities and plan them safely.

Yewstock School will consider the safety of their children when they are asked to work online. The starting point for online teaching should be that the same principles as set out in the school's Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use Agreement. These policies amongst other things include acceptable use of technologies, staff pupil/student relationships and communication including the use of social media. The policy applies equally to any existing or new online and distance learning arrangements which are introduced. Yewstock School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

An essential part of the online planning process is to ensure children who are being asked to work online have very clear reporting routes in place so they can raise any concerns whilst online. As well as reporting routes back to the school we signpost children to age appropriate practical support from the likes of:

Childline - for support

UK Safer Internet Centre - to report and remove harmful online content

CEOP - for advice on making a report about online abuse



School staff are making regular contact with parents and carers. Those communications should be used to reinforce the importance of children being safe online. It will be especially important for parents and carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and be clear who from the school or college (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.

Parents and carers may choose to supplement the school online offer with support from online companies and in some cases individual tutors. In their communications with parents and carers, staff will 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 and carers to keep their children safe online includes:

- Internet matters - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online <https://www.internetmatters.org>
- London Grid for Learning - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online <https://www.lgfl.net>
- Net-aware - for support for parents and careers from the NSPCC <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>
- Parent info - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers>
- Thinkuknow - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk>
- UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/uk-council-for-child-internet-safety-ukccis>
- CEOP: The National Crime Agency's Child Exploitation and Online Protection <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre>