



## COVID-19 Safeguarding

### 1. Safeguarding priority

During these challenging times, the safeguarding of all children at our centre, 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

### 2. 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, that is those children who absolutely need to attend. This was due to the Coronavirus outbreak in the UK. 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.

### 3. Vulnerable Children

Vulnerable children as 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. This includes those with a Child in Need plan. We recognise that previously looked after children are a potentially vulnerable group who may not have a social worker but will still need support. 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 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 can safely remain at home.

We 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 (LAC) and previously looked-after children (PLAC). We will work with social workers to ensure that Personal Education Plans (PEPs) for LAC are up to date with the current education offer that they are accessing. There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an educational setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. In circumstances where a parent/carer does not want to bring their child to the centre and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and CornerPost Education Centre will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent. Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, the centre or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

CornerPost Education Centre will encourage our vulnerable children to attend the centre. We can then offer daily support. For those vulnerable children who are not attending, a phone call will be made to check welfare of child.

We recognise that the centre is a protective factor for children and young people, and that the current circumstances can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. All staff are aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home. We also acknowledge that some children might be unwell and as such unable to complete work set and that some families do not have access to the technology required to complete some tasks. If this is known to be the case alternatives should be sought. We will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers on site, that appropriate support is in place for them. We will also ensure that staff receive appropriate support via supervision.

#### **4. Supporting vulnerable children not in school. Prioritising need and contact**

We are all committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all our children and young people.

There will be some vulnerable children, who may not be at the centre, for whom additional measures must be put in place to ensure their safety and wellbeing. These measures will consist of "Keeping in touch" phone calls which will take place each week to check on the welfare of the child. This will be recorded on their personal tracker. The DSL may discuss this with the child's social worker or other professional involved with the family. Maintaining contact is not the sole responsibility of the centre. As a rule, all children identified as vulnerable should be contacted at least weekly. Those with increased vulnerabilities at least every other day if not daily. DSL's must be clear in their assessments regarding the frequency and type of contact and record their decisions. Where contact is made this must be recorded. It is vital that staff speak to the child and ask about their welfare and make note of this conversation.

#### **5. Reporting a Concern**

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the CornerPost Education Centre Safeguarding Policy. Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay. Wherever possible, and following the CornerPost Education Centre policy, the report to DSL should be in person or at least by phone or video link. This may be followed up by an email. Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children, they should report the concern to the Centre Manager. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Centre manager whilst away from the site, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email. The centre manager will then follow the procedures laid out in KCSIE and The CornerPost Education Centre Safeguarding Policy. Concerns around the centre manager should be directed to the Chair of Committee Meeting. CornerPost Education Centre will continue to offer support in the process of managing any allegation.

#### **6. Attendance monitoring and DSL provision**

We are aware that schools do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance. The DfE has introduced a daily online attendance form to keep a record of children of critical workers and vulnerable children who are attending school. This allows for a record of attendance for safeguarding purposes and allows all our schools to provide accurate, up-to-date data to the department on the number of children taking up places.

Individual schools working with social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending the centre. CornerPost Education Centre will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. Wherever possible and to support good practice we 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, or discontinues, we will notify the relevant social worker or school headteacher.

Where a DSL is not on site, a senior leader must be on site and will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding. However, they will always have access to a DSL from within the partnership.

It is especially important that a detailed account is recorded including any views expressed by the child. In line with normal practice any decisions must be recorded along with the justification. It is important that all staff and volunteers are made aware how to contact the DSL. Staff on site will be made aware, on a daily basis, of who 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 if required to do so. CornerPost Education Centre will continue to offer support in the process of managing any allegations.

## **7. Safeguarding Training and induction**

CornerPost Education Centre understand that DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat from the COVID 19 virus. For the period that COVID-19 measures are in place, a DSL or DDSL who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL even if they miss / have missed their refresher training. All existing 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. Contact numbers and emails for DSL's/DDSLs' if not on site will be made available. Where new staff are recruited, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction. This should be provided by a trained DSL. Resources will be provided to support this. New staff should also read KCSIE Part One and sign to say that they have done this (link to be provided by DSL). Other documents including Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, will also be made available. If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting outside CornerPost Education Centre, HR will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic and will accept portability as long as the original school confirms in writing that:

- The individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check 11
- There are no known concerns about the individual's suitability to work with children
- There is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

## **8. 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, we 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 we 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. We 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.

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

## **9. Online safety**

CornerPost Education Centre will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system. Where pupils are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place. Whenever possible children will be reminded of the how to keep themselves safe online and how to report any online abuse.

## **10. Supporting children in school**

We are all committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all our pupils. CornerPost Education Centre will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. Our management Committee and centre manager will

ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety. We 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. We will use every opportunity to remind children how to keep themselves safe both online and other wise.

## **11. Mental Health**

CornerPost are aware of the impact of the negative experiences and distressing life events on the mental health of children, parents, and staff. We will, as we always have, ensure there is appropriate support and signposting to relevant support agencies in place, and supporting those children who continue to work from home

## **12. Peer on Peer Abuse**

We recognise that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such 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 our Child Protection Policy. CornerPost Education Centre 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. We will, wherever possible respond to all cyber bully alerts and continue to monitor these throughout the period. Concerns and actions will be recorded with appropriate referrals made.

## **13. Staffordshire families**

First Response 08001313126  
Emergency Duty Service 0845 6042888  
Education Support Service 01785 8985 836  
LADO 08001313126  
NSPCC 0808 800 5000  
[virtual.school@staffordhsire.gov.uk](mailto:virtual.school@staffordhsire.gov.uk)

It is highly likely that many key aspects of this update will be amended and revised over the coming days and weeks. We are confident we have the leadership and expertise to keep our children safe during these challenging times.

## **USEFUL LINKS (In date on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020)**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-educational-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020/actions-for-education-and-childcare-settings-to-prepare-for-wider-opening-from-1-june-2020>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/remote-education-practice-for-schools-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Review date: September 2022

## COVID-19 Procedure

- Parents to stay outside for dropping off and collecting keeping 2 metres apart.
- On entry, every person that enters the building must wash their hands.
- Children wash their hands before break, after break, before lunch and after co-op. (5 times a day) or if a child sneezes or coughs in their hands, hand wash straight away
- Seating in classrooms have been identified and marked 2 metres / 6 foot apart
- When children line up, they will adhere to 2 metres / 6 foot apart.
- Table plan for dining hall 2 metres / 6 foot apart.
- Children go to toilet one at a time.
- Outside play – social distancing tried to adhere to.
- When a child is ill at the centre, he/she is isolated to a separate room and parent is contacted to pick up immediately.
- Pupils not attending due to Covid-19, Keep in touch phone calls made twice a week for safeguarding. All phone calls recorded on personal progress trackers.
- If a parent phones to say their child is going into isolation because of themselves or family member the child will not be allowed back until the 14 days have passed. This is recorded on the main register; class register and personal progress tracker.

### **Cleaning**

- Cleaner disinfects all door handles, handrails, and high contact areas for hands e.g. door plates.

### **Gym**

- Gym is closed to public until further notice.

### **Meetings**

- DSL has Tamworth partner meetings every week through Skype