



COVID-19 SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY UPDATE (TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH ATLP'S MAIN POLICY)

The ATLP Trust Board review this policy annually. The policy was last reviewed in October 2019.

However, the Trust Board has authorised Sue Bailey (Safeguarding Lead) and Nicky Lawton (Data Protection Officer) to accept updates on matters of detail in between reviews. These changes would normally be listed in the codicil at the end of the policy.

Whereas the policy has not changed in its fundamental function, that is to keep our children safe, the changes are not matters of detail and consequently an addendum has been created rather than an extensive list in a codicil.

However, in line with good practice this addendum has been approved by the Chair of the Trust under the emergency powers entrusted to him.

The addendum has been used to update the policy following updates from the DfE on 30th March 2020 and in line with DfE Covid 19 Safeguarding in Schools, Colleges as well as guidance from other providers including Birmingham Children's Trust, Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire Children's Safeguarding Board, Warwickshire Children's Safeguarding Board and Solihull Safeguarding Board.

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1. Version control and dissemination

This is version 1.0 of this addendum. It will be reviewed by our Safeguarding Lead on a weekly basis or as circumstances continue to evolve or following any updated advice from the DfE. It will be made available on each school's website and will be shared with all staff.

We will ensure that on any given day all staff and volunteers in attendance will be aware of who the DSL and deputy DSLs are and how staff and volunteers can to speak to them.

2. 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.

3. 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.

This is an addendum to The Arthur Terry Learning Partnership (ATLP) Safeguarding, and Child Protection policy in direct response to the guidance issued on March 20th and subsequent guidance issued on March 27th.

4. Vulnerable children

ATLP defines 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.

Eligibility for free school meals should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy (DDSL) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to other vulnerable groups such as those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

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 school and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and 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 or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

ATLP will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend school. We can then offer daily support. For those vulnerable children who are not in school, special provision will be made to keep in touch and check on their welfare.

We recognise that school 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.

5. 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.

The vast majority of our children will remain safely at home and each school will do its best to deliver an appropriate education to these children based upon our Remote Teaching and Learning Policy.

However, there will be some vulnerable children, who may not be in school, 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 and in some very rare cases, home visits will be carried out. No member of staff however must enter a child's home and they should follow social distancing guidance at all times.

The Lead DSL should review each vulnerable case and prioritise based on the level of need and concern. They should establish how often contact should be made if that child is not in school, by whom and by what method. 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 school.

The DSL should also consider any local guidance given by the Children's' Safeguarding Board as to the frequency of the contact. We acknowledge that this advice differs across the partnership. DSL's should use their professional expertise, knowledge of their families and use the risk assessment process to determine the frequency and nature of contact.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be vulnerable, on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support within school, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child if they are not in school. The communication plans can include; email contact, phone contact or video call contact. Door-step visits are not recommended under the current conditions and should only be undertaken in line with the Home Visits Policy and **as an absolute last resort**. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded. Details of this plan must be recorded as should a record of any contact made using My Concern, CPOMS or individual student records.

Our DSL's 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.

We will all share safeguarding messages on our website and social media pages to further support our children.

The child's best interests should always come first but we are aware that we must protect our staff as well. As such staff **should not** enter a child's home and should adhere to **social distancing** recommendations at all times. Reference should be made to The ATLP Home Visits Policy.

Doorstep visits or the equivalent can be used to drop off equipment, food or to see a child from a distance. However, these should be to an **absolute minimum** to keep staff safe and are discouraged. Contact can be made by phone, post, email or video link. Staff should follow the guidelines already distributed plus the Staff Code of Conduct and Online Teaching and Learning Policy.

As a general 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.

DSL's will need to divide the children appropriately between the designated safeguarding lead(s), special educational needs co-ordinator(s) and designated teacher(s) for looked after children, ensuring they are appropriately trained for the role they are undertaking. Ensure that each member of the team knows which child they are allocated to, what their role is and are able to record the contact details on the appropriate system.

6. Easter break

Consider which of the "keeping in touch" calls need to continue through the Easter Holidays and which staff are available to make the calls. This should be on a voluntary basis. There may be some families whose circumstances have changed and no longer need this support. You will need to justify ceasing such calls to families that have had regular contact.

This may involve the DSL team, or others working on a voluntary remote basis from home undertaking "keeping in touch" phone calls.

Home visits of any kind **are not allowed** during this period. If deemed absolutely necessary a doorstep visit should be considered with headteacher consent, in twos and following strict social distancing guidelines. **Staff should not enter family homes.** However, if you are not able to make contact and are concerned, consider the following before embarking on a doorstep visit;

- Try all the available numbers for the family, including the emergency contact numbers.
- Re-assess the risk, does the lack of contact escalate your concerns?
- For CP/CiN children - speak to their allocated social worker or any other professional involved with the family
- Consider speaking to your local Social Care provision such as MASH CASS or First Response?
- If the risk is deemed critical - speak to the Police, they may do a 'safe & well' check. Do not hesitate to call 999 if you think a child has been harmed or is at serious risk of harm.
- Contact the Senior Education Safeguarding Officer for support if needed along with your headteacher and ATLP Safeguarding Lead.
- Record all your concerns and actions in line with school child protection

If after a doorstep visit you still have not made contact and are still concerned revisit the list above and then seek advice from Children's Social Services and the Police.

7. Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the ATLP Safeguarding Policy.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay. Staff in school must be made aware of how to contact a DSL.

Headteachers should ensure that they have an internal system for sharing DSL phone numbers with all staff and that staff are made aware who is on duty each day. Details of this rota should be kept in an easily accessible, known to all place. Wherever possible, and following the ATLP policy the report 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 headteacher. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the headteacher whilst away from the site, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email. The headteacher will then follow the procedures laid out in KCSiE and The ATLP Safeguarding Policy. Headteachers are advised to always contact ATLP HR for support.

Concerns around the headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors.

ATLP will continue to offer support in the process of managing any allegation.

8. Weekly Supervision and Case discussions

It is recommended that the Lead DSL co-ordinates a weekly meeting of the DSL team, remotely if necessary, to undergo a Group Supervision and Case Review.

Any concerns must be acted upon immediately. Some local authorities are asking that these are at a set time each week and that the meeting is then recorded and returned to the LA.

Please refer to The ATLP Supervision policy for a group proforma and meeting structure. It is good practice to ensure that every child with an allocated Social worker is discussed and findings recorded.

9. 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 school. All schools 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 VSH (Virtual School Head)

Across ATLP we aim to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on every site. Where this is not the case a trained DSL will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example when working from home. We will draw up a rota to ensure all our schools and DSL's are fully supported and can always access support. This should ensure that DSL's do not have to work in isolation and are always supported by a colleague from within our partnership.

Where a trained DSL is not on site, in addition to the above, 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 important that staff coordinating safeguarding as described above has access to online systems such as My Concern and CPOMS.

All relevant information must be recorded on My Concern or CPOMS or on individual paper files.

It is very 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 a trained DSL. Staff on site will be made aware, on a daily basis, of who that person is and how to speak to them. A list should be kept in a central location if appropriate. e.g. Reception/ School Office.

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.

ATLP will continue to offer support in the process of managing any allegations.

10. Safeguarding Training and induction

ATLP 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 ATLP 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 in each school. 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, Remote Teaching and Learning Policy and The Guide to Safer Working Practice will also be made available.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting **outside** ATLP, 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

- There are no known concerns about the individual's suitability to work with children
- There is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

For movement amongst schools within ATLP, assurance should be sought from the donor school that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training. 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. This will be particularly important if we move to a Hub model to safeguard our children.

11. 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.

We will also 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

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.

12. Online safety

Our schools will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system operated by Smooth Wall. 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.

13. Remote online contact. Teaching and Learning

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 in line with Child Protection Policy and where appropriate, referrals should be made to children's social care and as required or the police. Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the ATLP Staff Code of conduct and the new guidance issued in the draft Remote Teaching and Learning Policy.

Staff should use every opportunity to remind the children they are in contact with of staying safe on the internet. We will also convey key messages to parents and carers via social media and our websites

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

14. Supporting children in school

We are all committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all our pupils. Our schools will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. Our Governors and headteacher 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.

Where we have concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders we will they will discuss this with our Directors of Education, either primary or secondary.

15. 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. Our schools 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 as raised by Smooth Wall and continue to monitor these throughout the period.

Concerns and actions will be recorded appropriate referrals made.

16. Preparing for a Hub model

It might be that in the future we will operate in Hubs and children and staff will need to relocate to other schools within the partnership.

ATLP, as the Data Controller, will share information across its schools on a need to know basis and in order to protect all children who are on school site, to the most senior person on duty that day. All information shared will be done so securely and deleted by the host school when schools return from COVID-19.

We are asking DSL's (a similar requirement for SENCO and Designated teacher for LAC) to prepare a summary of the child's needs that would accompany them to the Hub school. Older students could contribute to this and it would be good practice to share what information is being sent with parents/carers. It should include

- Underlying concerns
- Any specific medical conditions
- Actions & Interventions
- All contact details including social worker or other professionals involved

The Hub school will be overall responsible but will need guidance to enable them to effectively support the relocated pupil. They will also need to respond to any local authority requests such as from a social worker or the VSH.

We understand that reviews of child protection plans will go ahead remotely as scheduled. schools will be contacted by the Conference Chair regarding the provision and distribution of reports and conference calling arrangements. The same will apply for statutory reviews for children who are looked after and the social worker and independent reviewing officer will liaise with you regarding your contribution to the review process.

17. Key contact numbers

Birmingham families

CASS. 0121 303 1888

Out of hours 0121 675 4806

Education Safeguarding Team-0121 675 4874

West Midlands Police 0845 8005000

LADO 0121675 1669

Adult Health and Social Care (for those over 18)

Staffordshire families

First Response 08001313126

Emergency Duty Service 0845 6042888

Education Support Service 01785 8985 836

LADO 08001313126

Warwickshire families

MASH 019264 414 144

Education Support Service 01926742525

Out of hours 01926 886922

Family Information Service 01926 422 74

LADO 0192643433

NSPCC 0800800500/Whistle Blowing hotline 0800

It is very 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 across our Partnership to keep our children safe during these challenging times.