

Penk Valley Academy Trust Safeguarding Policy

Covid 19 Child Protection Addendum

For the full guidance issued on 27 March 2020, please click on the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers>

Safeguarding and clusters

Where schools collaborate and children and/or staff from multiple settings are clustered in one place, the principles in Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) and this guidance continue to apply. In particular, the school that is acting as the hub in the cluster must continue to provide a safe environment, keep children safe and ensure staff and volunteers have been appropriately checked and risk assessments carried out as required.

Keeping children safe in schools and colleges

KCSIE is statutory safeguarding guidance we must continue to have regard to as per our legislative duty and/or funding agreement requirements.

It remains essential that as far as possible our schools continue to be safe places for children. The way we are 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 children must always continue to come first
- if anyone in a school or college has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act and act immediately
- a DSL or deputy should be available
- it is essential that unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children
- children should continue to be protected when they are online

Child Protection Policy addendum

- PVAT will consider and respond to any 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.
- All school staff and volunteers must continue to act immediately on any safeguarding concerns, as per the PVAT Safeguarding Policy and KCSIE (2019).
- All open schools must ensure that a DSL (or deputy) is available. Wherever possible they will be physically present on the site of each open school. Where this is impossible then a named DSL or deputy will be available by phone either from their home or from another PVAT school.
- All schools must continue to work with and support children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

- If staff and volunteers have concerns about a staff member or volunteer who may pose a safeguarding risk to children, they must report it immediately to their school's headteacher. If they are not available, then they should report it to their school's DSL or deputy.
- All schools will identify children they are concerned about, including those who do not meet the 'vulnerable' definition. Schools will have written arrangements in place to keep monitoring the welfare of these children.
- All schools must consider the safety of their children when they are asked to work online.
- All staff and volunteers must be made aware of this addendum and be kept up to date as it is revised. The revised policy will continue to be made available publicly.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter the school or college, they must continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction. This Child Protection addendum (described above) will support this process, as will part 1 of KCSIE.

The existing school workforce may move between schools on a temporary basis in response to COVID-19. The receiving school must judge, on a case-by-case basis, the level of safeguarding induction required. In most cases, the existing workforce will already have received appropriate safeguarding training from the trust and all they will require is confirmation of DSL arrangements.

Any school whose children are attending another setting to do whatever they reasonably can to 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 should 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. As a minimum 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) 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.

Online safety

An essential part of the online planning process will be ensuring 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 this should also 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](#)

Schools will be in 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

asked to access and be clear who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.