



Appendix 1

Child Protection COVID-19 school closure arrangements Annex Date: 20 April 2020

1. Response to COVID-19

There have been significant changes within our setting in response to the outbreak. The vast majority of students are now at home and staffing continues to be significantly affected through illness and self-isolation.

Despite the changes, the school's Child Protection Policy is fundamentally the same: **children and young people always come first, staff should respond robustly to safeguarding concerns and contact the DSL in line with our established safeguarding procedure.**

Keeping Children Safe in Education is the statutory safeguarding guidance we will continue to have regard to as per our legislative duty. The government has provided additional guidance to support governing bodies, proprietors, senior leadership teams and designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) in order that they can continue to have appropriate regard to KCSIE and keep their children safe. The additional guidance for the COVID-19 period can be found here:

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

2. The current school position and local advice

Our priority is the health and safety of our students, staff and the wider population. As a result, Abbot's Lea School will remain closed to all students and all staff for as long as the governmental decision is to:

- Maintain national lockdown, and
- Close all schools, and
- Recommend social distancing.

The school will therefore remain closed until further notice.

During this time, Abbot's Lea School will do what it reasonably can in order to keep all of our students safe. In most cases, the majority of our students will not physically be attending any childcare provider and will be remaining at home. It is important that all staff who interact with

students, including online, continue to look out for signs that a child may be at risk. Any such concerns will be dealt with in line with our main Child Protection policy and local safeguarding arrangements. Where appropriate, referrals will still be made to children's services and as required, the police, **without delay**.

Liverpool City Council childcare provision

Children of essential key workers who do not have any alternative childcare, as well as children classed as too vulnerable to be care for at home, may be offered a place in one of the LCC hubs. Please contact your nearest hub for more information by searching for Liverpool City Council Hubs, or by following the link below:

<https://liverpool.gov.uk/communities-and-safety/emergency-planning/coronavirus/childcarehubs-and-education/childcare-hubs-for-key-workers/>

Further information regarding the response by Liverpool City Council to COVID-19 can be found here:

<https://liverpool.gov.uk/communities-and-safety/emergency-planning/coronavirus/>

Liverpool City Council "Urgent Needs" Fund

'Urgent Needs' Fund is for people who are currently experiencing hardship, due to the coronavirus outbreak. The fund is open to anyone who is experiencing the following issues:

- People who have no food, gas or electricity
- People who have received benefit sanctions or who have applied for benefits but haven't received an award yet
- People who have been put on Furlough by their employer and are experiencing hardship as a result of the 20% reduction in their salary
- People who have a number of children at home and are unable to feed them due to school closures
- Any other issues that cause hardship

The support worker or the person experiencing hardship should call telephone number: 0151 233 3053 to speak to an operator. A series of questions will be asked to determine if the person is eligible for support. If they are, they or you will be supported over the phone to complete an online application form. A decision will be given within 2 days of the application being accepted. The award given does not need to be paid back.

Free School Meals Vouchers

During the school closure, students eligible for Free School Meals are entitled to vouchers, issued to their families. Vouchers for next week (20 April) have already been ordered by us and sent to the eligible families. We will then order vouchers each Monday for the following week and distribute them to each family

Free School Meals entitlement is easy for us to check and is also likely to rise, in light of the economic impact of the COVID-19. If you feel you might be eligible for this support, please contact us and we will be able to run a check based on a few bits of information. To do so, please contact Mr Cocklin, Head of Finance and Operations, on Andrew.cocklin@abbotsleaschool.co.uk

3. Term 5 arrangements

Upon the start of Term 5 on Monday, 20 April 2020, the class teams will be in weekly touch with every student and family to maintain the relationship and offer support. It is acknowledged that the current circumstances surrounding COVID-19 are particularly stressful and may cause increased anxieties and stress for all members of our school community. When children and staff are away from their usual routine and social contact, this can become a negative and stressful experience. Abbot's Lea School will ensure there is appropriate support available for the whole school community at this time.

The school community can also be signposted to the government's advice on supporting children and young people's mental health during the COVID-19 outbreak, available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

The pressures on children and their families at this time are significant. There will be heightened awareness of family pressures through being contained in a small area, poverty, and financial or health anxiety. These areas have been considered in the setting of any work for students to undertake at home (including recognising the impact of online learning – see below). Staff will be aware of the mental health of both students and their parents and carers, informing the Safeguarding Team about any concerns.

Staff will continue to follow the Child Protection procedures and advise the safeguarding leads immediately about concerns they have about any child. COVID-19 means a need for increased vigilance due to the pressures on services, families and young people, rather than a reduction in our standards.

Where staff in school have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in our main Child Protection policy. This includes making a report via CPOMS.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any **Child Protection** concern immediately and without delay by verbally reporting to a member of the Safeguarding Team before recording on CPOMS. A Child Protection concern is where the child may be in need of immediate protection from harm.

If a member of staff believes a child is at risk of harm then the Designated Safeguarding Lead should ring **Liverpool Careline on 0151 233 3700, without delay**. However, it is always the case that **any** member of staff can ensure Liverpool Careline is contacted without delay.

If a child is in immediate/imminent danger, then staff should ring the police.

Safeguarding-mate can provide additional key guidance to all staff regarding key safeguarding procedures www.schoolimprovementliverpool.co.uk/safeguarding-mate/

Concerns regarding the conduct of a member of staff should continue to be dealt with in line with our managing allegations policy.

4. Reporting arrangements

The school arrangements continue in line with our Child Protection policy.

The Safeguarding Team can be contacted at: safeguarding@abbotsleaschool.co.uk

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

Alison Twomey, Head of Care and Safeguarding

The Deputy DSLs are:

Ania Hildrey, Headteacher

Lisa Sharpe, Family Adviser

Claire Caddick, Job Coach

Maria O'Neill, EYFS and Key Stage 1 Leader

Richard Hodgson, Key Stage 3 Leader

Katie Dallas, Key Stage 4 Leader

Ryan Mason, Key Stage 5 Leader

Throughout the COVID-19 period, the safeguarding team will continue to engage with social workers and attend and contribute to all multi-agency meetings, as determined by the local procedures for remote meetings

5. Online safety

Where students are not physically attending a Hub, Abbot's Lea School will consider the safety of our children when they are asked to work online. The starting point for online contact remains the same as the principles set out in our school's employee code of conduct policy. This policy includes acceptable use of technologies, staff/student relationships and communication including the use of social media. This policy applies equally to any existing or new online and distance learning arrangements which have been introduced. The principles set out in the 'guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings' (May 2019) published by the Safer Recruitment Consortium should be adhered to by all staff.

Young people will be using the internet more during this period. The school will also use online approaches to deliver support. The platform we are using is Zoom and SLT have fully risk assessed its use for social interaction. Staff will be aware of the signs and signals of cyberbullying and other risks online and apply the same child-centred safeguarding practices as when children were learning at the school.

- The school continues to ensure appropriate filters and monitors are in place
- Staff have been provided with full training and guidance in the use of Zoom for online social contact with students and their families
- Families have been provided with clear instructions about the use of Zoom and the potential risks involved
- Our governing body will review arrangements to ensure they remain appropriate
- The school has taken on board guidance from the UK Safer Internet Centre on safe remote learning and guidance for safer working practice from the Safer Recruitment Consortium. We have reviewed the code of conduct and information sharing policy accordingly

- Staff have discussed the risk that professional boundaries could slip during this exceptional period and been reminded of the school's code of conduct and importance of using school systems to communicate with students and their families.
- Free additional support for staff in responding to online safety issues can be accessed from the Professionals Online Safety Helpline at the UK Safer Internet Centre.

Class teams will be in weekly contact with parents and carers during the period of school closure. Communication with families will reinforce the importance of students being safe online. Families will be made aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and who their child is going to be interacting with online, including members of staff from our school

Any online learning tools or systems recommended for use by Abbot's Lea School are in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

6. Operation Encompass notifications

When we receive an operation encompass notification relating to a student at our school, during the COVID19 period, our response may be different to normal. If the student is in attendance at an alternative Hub, we will securely share the information with the DSL for that setting. If the student is not attending any setting and is being cared for at home, we will risk assess the situation taking into consideration the history of the child and family. This information will be used in order to determine our response to each individual case. This may include gaining the 'voice of the child' where appropriate.

This policy has been remotely approved by Governors on 29 May 2020 and is available on the school website.