

Haversham Village School

COVID-19 changes to our Child Protection Policy



'Bringing out the best in everyone'

Response to COVID-19

There have been significant changes within our setting in response to the outbreak. Many young people are now at home and staffing is likely 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, and staff should respond robustly to safeguarding concerns and contact the DSL in line with our established safeguarding procedure.

This annex sets out some of the adjustments we are making in line with the changed arrangements in the school and following advice from government and local agencies.

Reporting arrangements

The school arrangements continue in line with our child protection policy.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

Alison Mears
office@haversham.milton-keynes.sch.uk

The Deputy DSL/s are:

Hollie McEvoy

Megan Holmes

The school's approach ensures the DSL or a deputy is always contactable while the school is open. All staff will be re-issued with contact details for DSLs during school closure and should report any concerns.

Staff will continue to follow the Child Protection procedure and advise the safeguarding leads immediately about concerns they have about any child, whether in school or not. 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.

Children's services may be affected by the impact of the virus on staff and an increased demand for services. Where a child is at risk of significant harm there may be a need to be persistent in referring concerns to the local authority. The arrangements for contacting the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is: 01908 691691

Identifying vulnerability

Schools relationships with the community mean we have identified children who may be classed as 'vulnerable.'

We have put in place specific arrangements in respect of children who we feel are vulnerable. More children may be added to this group in response to concerns raised with the DSL. Contact arrangements will be agreed with parents, HT and AHT.

In addition, the following groups have specific arrangements around contact and support from the school.

- Children of critical workers who may attend school if no safe alternative arrangements can be made.
- Children at home – work packs sent home with regular updates provided via the school website and Class Dojo

The plans in respect of each child who we consider vulnerable will be reviewed regularly.

Holiday arrangements

School will be open over Easter. Emergency details of Social Care, Early Help Offer and local charities will be published on the website

Staff will be aware of increased risk

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 should be considered in the setting of any work for children to undertake at home (including recognising the impact of online learning – see below). Staff will be aware of the mental health of both children and their parents, informing the DSL about any concerns.

Incidences of domestic abuse are expected to significantly increase during the period of isolation as perpetrators will use this time as a “tool of coercive and controlling behaviour”, and victims and their children are consistently more vulnerable during periods of societal stress (see government guidance).

Risk online

Young people will be using the internet more during this period. The school may also use online approaches to deliver training or support. Staff will be aware of the signs and signals of cyberbullying and other risks online and apply the same child-centered safeguarding practices as when children were learning at the school.

- The school continues to ensure appropriate filters and monitors are in place
- Our governing body will review arrangements to ensure they remain appropriate
- 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 children and their families.
- Children and young people accessing remote learning receive guidance.
- Parents have information via the website about keeping children safe online with peers, the school, other education offers they may access and the wider internet community. We have set out the school's approach, including the sites children will be asked to access and set out who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online. *Parents have been offered the following links:*

- Net-aware - for support for parents and carers from the NSPCC Parent info - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- Thinkuknow - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- UK Safer Internet Centre - advice for parents and carers
- www.childnet.com - advice for parents and carers

***add to website!**

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.

Staff delivering teaching online should listen for any cues that indicate a safeguarding concern and report these to the DSL as soon as possible. These cues might include:

- Comments or questions about child abuse or neglect
- Inadequate supervision at home
- The impact of food poverty
- The health status in a family and any young caring responsibilities children have

Allegations or concerns about staff

With such different arrangements, young people could be at greater risk of abuse from staff. We remind all staff to maintain the view that 'it could happen here' and to immediately report any concern, no matter how small, to the safeguarding team.

In accordance with relevant law and guidance this policy sets out our procedures for safeguarding and child protection during the Covid 19 emergency response. It applies to all staff working at Haversham Village School.

- Child abuse exists where children have been physically or emotionally abused or severely neglected. During the emergency Covid 19 measures the majority of our student population will not be seen by staff, therefore it is essential that everyone is observant and listening to the voice of the child during any contact.
- Despite the emergency nature of the current situation everyone in the school has a role of recognising and responding to potential indicators of abuse and neglect, all action should be taken by those with statutory powers to help the child. Early contact and close liaison with such agencies are therefore regarded as essential by the school.
- In the event of an actual or suspected case of child abuse by adults, parents, or any other adult, it is the responsibility of staff to report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as possible.

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for ensuring that children are identified, and the appropriate agency involved.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will attend any reviews called by the Local Authority by Zoom or other means of social distancing and may call on appropriate members of staff for reports.
- A confidential register will be maintained of all those students known to be at risk.
- All safeguarding concerns will be recorded reported to the DSL.

Attendance to school

Haversham Village School follows the Government advice that only if absolutely necessary will students attend the setting.

These circumstances are:

- If the student is deemed vulnerable
- If the student has an EHCP
- If the student is in need of a social worker (on a CP or CiN Plan).
- If the student is the child of a Key Worker – where NO OTHER childcare facility can be arranged

Allegations against Members of Staff

These should be handled in the same way as it normally would be. Immediate contact to be made with Alison Mears or Megan Holmes. LADO should be communicated with and advice followed.

Key Documents

- Haversham Village School Child Protection Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, updated September 2019, DfE
- Working Together to Safeguard Children, July 2018, HM Government
- Corona Virus – Covid 19, Guidance on Vulnerable Children and Young People
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerablechildrenand-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people>

- Covid 19 – Guidance for Schools about Temporary Closing
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures/guidance-for-schoolsabouttemporarily-closing>
- Coronavirus (COVID-19): attendance recording for educational settings
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recordingforeducational-settings>