



Inscape House School

Keeping Children Safe in Education

Interim Safeguarding & Child Protection Arrangements

- Coronavirus (Covid-19)

Ratified by Designated Safeguarding Officer:

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'Jill Sheldrake', written over a horizontal line.

(Jill Sheldrake)

Date to be reviewed: April 2021

Context

Whilst acknowledging the pressure that all schools and colleges are under as a result of the required responses to addressing coronavirus (Covid-19), we understand it remains essential that we continue to be a safe place for students.

This guidance is designed to support us a whole school community to ensure we continue to have appropriate regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education ([KCSIE 2019](#)) and promote the welfare of all our students.

The way schools and colleges 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 and young people 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 immediately in line with existing expectation
- A Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputy must be available, either face to face, or remotely via telephone or video link.
- Safer working practices must be maintained -it is essential that unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children.
- Children and young people should continue to be safeguarded when they are online.

Schools are therefore being asked to continue to provide care for a limited number of children and young people - those who are vulnerable, and those whose parents are critical to the Covid-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

Vulnerable children and young people include those who are supported by social care (have a social worker), those with **safeguarding and welfare needs**, including child in need plans, on child protection plans, 'looked after' children, and young carers.

As well as safeguarding children and young people who are attending our setting, thought must be given to how we safeguard those at home who are also deemed to be vulnerable. Safeguarding principles remain unchanged. How we escalate and manage them is communicated here and will be shared with all Governors and staff to ensure they are understood by the whole school community. This document is an annex to our more detailed safeguarding policy which still contains relevant details and information on recognising and responding to abuse and continues to be a source of reference.

As a school and in line with guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) we are committed to working in partnership with our host Local Authority and

Safeguarding Children Partnership, as well as all of our other partner Local Authorities. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all should make sure their approach remains child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child or young person. We work in a multi-agency way understanding no single professional can have a full picture of a child or young person's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

1 School provision for students currently supported at Team Around the Child (TAC) Level 3 or subject to a Child Protection Plan

Children and families who have an allocated Social Worker will **continue** to be supported by them.

Schools continue to be a potential key source of additional support to this group. The established relationships between school and family are of great value and may be key to them feeling confident in seeking and engaging with help when it is needed. Where parents decide they will keep their child at home, regular contact will be maintained with both the family and the allocated Social Worker.

Going forward we recognise these children and young people may need to access school and engage in the daily care offer. Where these children and young people need to attend, we will work with Social Workers to offer such a placement. Where families inform us of a need for help, by way of a placement, we will work with them and Children's Social Care (as appropriate) to agree a plan of support. Where we believe a child or young person is at risk of significant harm or danger, we will refer our concerns (by **phone** in the first instance) to Children's Social Care – as described in our full Safeguarding Policy.

The contact system outlined in section 1 is a crucial component to the proactive safeguarding for this group.

Child protection referrals to the Multi-agency Safeguarding and Support Hub (MASSH) will be made via telephone.

We will ensure that a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) is available to support staff either in person, or remotely via video/telephone or email, where they have concerns about a child or young person.

This includes:

- Children and young people attending the setting

- Those children and their families being contacted by school staff as part of a support package.
- Children or young people who cause concern through other contact or interactions with staff e.g. through remote learning offers etc.

2 Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child or young person they should continue to follow the process outlined in the Trust's Safeguarding Policy.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay in line with the Trust's Safeguarding policy.

The full responsibilities of the DSL and their deputy are covered in our main Safeguarding Policy.

If staff cannot reach the DSL/DDSL, and they consider a child or young person to be at immediate risk of harm they will contact the relevant Local Authority Social Care or the Police -999 as they feel appropriate.

The DSL/DDSL & other pastoral staff will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

3 Young carers

We understand that at this current time students who are young carers may benefit from additional contact and support. We are committed to working with other agencies to support their wellbeing and will take the following steps:

- Once a week phone contact with the young person.
- Make sure the young carer knows how to access advice for the person they are caring for.
- Awareness of help and support through Stockport's website for guidance.
- Offer of food support if needed
- Recorded and report concerns in the appropriate way.

4 Children and Young People with an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP)

Inscape House School has a key role to play in supporting all of our children and young people and maintaining contact. Whilst some students may remain in school, we also continue to support all children and young people who are being supported at home.

We remain committed to supporting our children and young people and will take the following steps:

- Where students are not in school we will ensure that phone contact is maintained by the school with all parents and carers at least once per week, with regular email contact to further support.
- Where it is identified that a child or family are in need of additional support or guidance we will ensure that this is in place. This may include extra phone calls, signposting and referring to other services. All interactions will be logged and stored confidentially.
- All children and families will be provided with a point of contact for support. This will be a school phone number and an actively monitored email account. Sharing of personal phone numbers and emails is prohibited. If using a personal phone to contact a parent/carer, ensure that the function is used to withhold the number (dialling 141 before the telephone number).
- All children and families will receive packs of information and resources from our Therapy Team, and a point of contact will be established within the team for any families requiring further support in the area of Speech and Language or Occupational Therapy.
- All children and young people currently receiving Counselling or Play Therapy support will continue this with our Counsellors remotely.

5 Supporting children and young people in school

Inscape House School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

We will continue to be a safe space for all children and young people to attend and flourish. The 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 ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children and young people on site, appropriate support is in place for them. This will be tailored to each child and young person as needed and recorded.

The Trust has a redeployment programme which will be utilised when there are concerns about staff absence to ensure that the school has the necessary key staff in place, such as First Aiders, DSLs.

6 Safeguarding children and young people (off school site)

As a school we recognise that our students may face challenges and be exposed to risks whilst away from school for this extended period. School staff will still have contact with students, and we will use this time as an opportunity to offer support, advice and guidance, applying the principles of the school environment to offer suitable pastoral support. Everyone has a role to play and we expect staff to be vigilant in their interactions with students. Staff should take steps to safeguard students by contacting the DSL/DDSL or by making a direct referral **(in line with usual expectations- see school safeguarding policy)**.

7 Online safety

It is likely many students are accessing internet enabled devices more frequently whilst families follow the advice of the government to 'stay at home'. This is also currently our primary source of contact with most of our students. It is therefore of the utmost importance that we continue to create as many opportunities as we can to support and educate children and young people on how to stay safe online. Staff should be mindful of existing policies and the details described by the DfE in KCSiE19 -[teaching-online-safety-in-schools](#) .

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

Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- The Trust approved consent form must be used to gain consent from parents/carers to use the approved virtual platform. All consents must be logged centrally within the service.
- 1:1 teaching or other contact sessions should only take place at a time agreed with parent/carer, and the parent/carer must be present whilst the lesson/contact is taking place. The session will be recorded and securely stored for a 6 month period or longer if safeguarding concerns are raised.
- Staff and students must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms. A blank background with no personal photos/items in direct view.
- Live classes with groups of students will not take place. However, pre-recorded sessions can be uploaded (using YouTube or Nearpod). The exception to this will be allowing one student at home to join a live class within school, utilising Zoom. A risk assessment must also be completed. MS Teams will be used for setting and reviewing assignments once the system has been implemented in May 2020.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms specified by senior managers and approved by our IT network manager / provider to communicate with students (currently

Zoom and future introduction of Microsoft Teams). Staff must receive training on how to utilise all the required functions of these tools before hosting a session.

- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

8 Peer Abuse

Inscape House School recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing students on and off site and providing support to any report of such abuse.

Where a school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in the main safeguarding policy and in part 5 of KCSIE.

The school will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on Behaviourwatch and appropriate referrals made.

9 Attendance

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance.

If Inscape House School has any children and young people in attendance (e.g. because they are vulnerable or their parent(s) / carers are critical workers) we will submit the daily attendance sheet to the DfE by 12 noon -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings>

10 Emotional wellbeing

We recognise the complexities and challenges of the Covid-19 crisis and the potential impact it may have on the emotional wellbeing of our staff and students. We will continually review guidance and cascade information across our workforce. We ask staff to be vigilant for signs of distress and to respond to them in line with our usual working practice.

<https://www.gov.uk/education/health-safety-and-wellbeing-in-schools>

11 Encompass

As an Encompass school we receive notifications from the Police informing us when there has been an incident of domestic abuse or violence at a child or young

person's home. This process is to continue, and we will actively monitor notifications, risk assess them in conjunction with other information we hold and escalate our concerns. We will make assessments on a case by case basis of the need to contact families following a notification.

12 Safer recruitment & safer working practice

Any new staff, visitors or volunteers will be risk assessed and inducted in line with existing practice and in compliance with, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 KCSiE.

Staff should continue to apply the principles of our safer working practice standards and general code of conduct.

It is particularly important that staff pay regard to previous advice and guidance on safer worker practice, **especially in relation to any online activity**.

13 Staff training & safeguarding induction

All existing school staff have completed statutory safeguarding training and have read part 1 of KCSiE, safer working practice and the school's safeguarding policy. Staff should adhere to the principles of these key documents and this supplementary guide. Staff should also be aware that there may be further updates and guidance. Individuals will need to be vigilant and ensure that they read all new guidance and ask for clarity or support if required.

Additional Information

Advice on the use of social media by education colleagues- Covid19 arrangements

During this period of disruption, we are seeing some truly creative approaches to engaging young people, particularly from the education sector. It is important that we do not lose sight of safeguarding practices and standards, or the reasons we have them in the first place. When using Social media or other platforms we need to risk assess continuously. Although these are unprecedented times and we do not have a 'map' for many of the unfolding challenges, we can support our colleagues to work safely and continue to apply safer working standards.

As a starting point it may be useful to refresh on the specific age limits that are applied to platforms.

Most social media services require users to be at least 13 years of age to access and use their services. This includes Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, Instagram, Musical.ly and Skype. WhatsApp has an age restriction of 16 years and older.

Using social media as a learning platform is not recommended, because of the age restrictions in place and also because there is opportunity to create informal relationships between students and staff.

Whilst there is no age restriction for watching videos on YouTube, users need to be 13 or older to have their own YouTube account (enabling them to subscribe to other channels, like videos, post comments, share their own content and flag inappropriate content). As a sector we have worked consistently to ensure that these messages are repeatedly shared with parents and carers as part of our approaches to safeguarding. As role models in the community I am sure you all agree that we must follow our own advice and respect the guidelines.

Obviously, it is important we have routes to interact and exchange information with young people as it is a key way to safeguard their physical and emotional wellbeing; as well as offering informal opportunities to learn and maintaining a sense of identity and belonging.

Staff need to continue to maintain their professional standards in these more informal times, and you may wish to remind them of your respective standards and

acceptable user agreements. This should help avoid momentary lapses in judgment and encourage colleagues to reflect on language, dress, environments and any materials or videos before they publish content.