

COVID-19 SCHOOL CLOSURE ARRANGEMENTS AS ADDENDUM TO THE CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Date: March 2021

Document Control

Organisation	Falinge Park High School
Title	Covid19 – School Closure Arrangements as Addendum to the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Author	J Turrell
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Owner	J Turrell
Subject	
Review date	January 2022 or earlier in line with updates

Revision History

Revision Date	Revisor	Previous Version	Description of Revision
March 2021	J Turrell	January 2021	<p>Updates to reflect return to school for all pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attendance monitoring procedures • online safety procedures and safeguarding guidance for Remote and Live learning amended to reflect current practice
January 2021	J Turrell	September 2020	<p>Updates to reflect partial school closure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • online safety procedures and safeguarding guidance for Remote and Live learning amended to reflect current practice • tiers become categories of children and contact plans amended for children during further lockdown.
September 2020	J Turrell	27 April 2020	<p>Updates to reflect return of pupils to school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • removal of clustering arrangements • attendance monitoring guidance • online safety procedures and safeguarding guidance for Remote and Live learning • introduction of tiers for children and contact plans where isolating or in the event of a full/partial lockdown.

27 April 2020	J Turrell	15 April 2020	Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working with third party organisations • expectations re monitoring attendance and data sharing with LA and DfE • Rochdale clustering arrangements (where staff and pupils from multiple settings are clustered in one place).
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Document Approvals

This document requires the following approvals:

Approval Sought From	Name	Date
Safeguarding Governor	Paul Young	March 2021

Document Distribution

This document will be distributed to:

Individual/Group	Job Title/Group Type	Distribution Date
Staff		March 2021

**School Name: Falinge Park High School Policy Owner: Julia Turrell Date: March 2021
Date shared with staff: week beginning 8th March 2021**

Scope and context

This addendum has been reviewed in March 2021, following the end of the second national lockdown and the direction that from 8 March 2021, all pupils should attend school. The addendum reflects updated advice from our 3 local safeguarding partners and Rochdale LA. It should be read in conjunction with our school safeguarding policy.

Unless covered here, our normal school safeguarding and child protection policy continues to apply.

Keeping Children Safe in Education

Throughout the period of pandemic, we continue to have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

Although our school needs to operate in different ways in order to manage risks associated with Covid 19, we always follow these important safeguarding principles:

- The best interests of children must come first
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they must act on it immediately
- A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy should be available at all times during term time
- School takes all reasonable precautions to prevent unsuitable people entering the school workforce or gaining access to children
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online

We will take a whole institution approach to safeguarding and will ensure that new policies and ways of working in response to COVID-19 do not weaken or undermine safeguarding, which remains at the heart of our school ethos.

Safeguarding all children

Staff and volunteers are aware that the periods of lockdown(s) and ongoing uncertainties attributed to the pandemic could put all children at greater risk. Staff and volunteers at our school will be alert to any signs of abuse, trauma or effects on pupils' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and will act on concerns immediately in line with the school procedure. This includes any concerns about peer on peer abuse, in which event school will continue to follow the principles set out in part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education and our school procedures.

All staff and volunteers will refer safeguarding concerns about a child to the DSL via MyConcern to seek advice and share information. This will apply for children that are attending school and for any children that may be at home accessing online learning or at home for any other reason.

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding Policy, which includes making a written record via MyConcern, which can be done remotely. If a member of staff cannot access their school's recording mechanism, they should contact the Safeguarding Leads and Safeguarding Officer by phone and/or email.

DSL/ DDSL arrangements

We aim to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site wherever possible. If our DSL (or deputy) can't be in school, they can be contacted remotely via phone on:

Julia Turrell	turrellj@falingepark.com	07870172116
Simon Ward	wards@falingepark.com	07870172114
Kate Broadhurst	broadhurstk@falingepark.com	07970052057
Claire Heywood	heywoodc@falingepark.com	07816096641

Our Safeguarding team will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which may take place remotely.

If there are occasions where there is no DSL or deputy DSL on site, the Headteacher or a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding. This will be:

Janice Allen	allenj@falingepark.com	07966628604
Louise Pottinger	pottingerl@falingepark.com	07814452046

The Headteacher/senior leader will be responsible for liaising with the off-site DSL (or DDSL) to make sure they (the senior leader) can:

- Identify the most vulnerable children in school and deal with any concerns and disclosures
- Update and manage access to child protection files, where necessary
- Liaise with children's social workers where they need access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments

In the event that we do not have DSL cover available due to staffing shortages, school will notify Gillian Barratt, Head of Schools and Claire Heap, Education Safeguarding Officer, so that arrangements can be considered for sharing resource with another school.

We will keep all school staff and volunteers informed if there is any change to the DSL (or deputy) on any given day, and how to contact them.

Children's mental health

Staff and volunteers are aware of the possible effect that the pandemic and/or other events or circumstances that a child may experience, may have on their mental health. School will continue to offer support in relation to the mental health of all pupils.

Staff will look out for behavioural indicators, including pupils being fearful, withdrawn, aggressive, oppositional or excessively clingy, and will share information with the DSL to help identify where support may be needed.

School will signpost pupils, parents/carers and staff to resources and services to support good mental health.

Online safety - Remote Learning and Live Learning

When the majority of pupils return to face to face learning from the week commencing 8th March, there may be circumstances where students still require access to remote learning if they are self-isolating. Not all of this learning will be live with work being set that is synchronous to the in-school learning via google classroom. There may be times when students are invited to engage in live lessons. When this is the case the same expectations regarding behaviour and safeguarding apply.

When delivering remote learning and live learning, the following must take place:

- All teachers to deliver the live learning in their classroom (unless working from home/self-isolating, see below);
- All teachers to ensure the video is enabled for the teacher;
- The quick access function is disabled so that students have to request access to join the meet in order to prevent pupils from accessing who are not in the teaching group;
- If a child is marked with a N the attendance team and Head of Year will chase up that child's attendance in line with the standard school process;
- At home, children do not need to wear a uniform when at home on the online lessons but they do need to make sure they are dressed;
- Children should be encouraged to have their video on but if this is causing a child anxiety then the teacher should use their professional judgement;
- Children should be in an environment whereby any other person is not visible, although we accept this is not always possible;
- If there are any issues in the lesson, the teacher is to notify the Head of Year immediately via email and complete a behavior log on SIMS. Behaviour incidents involve disruption to the lesson in any way, including making verbal or written comments (via chat) that do not contribute to the lesson;
- Where a 1:1 session is taking place to provide additional support, it will be recorded with the pupil being informed that this is the case;
- Where a third party is delivering a live remote session to a group of pupils, a member of school staff will be present, where this is deemed necessary.

Safeguarding children and staff at home during remote learning

This guidance from The Key and NSPCC sets out the best way to safeguard pupils and staff during remote learning. This information has also been shared with parents:

- Sit against a neutral background

- If the member of staff is self-isolating and is delivering a live lesson from home, avoid recording in their bedroom where possible (if that's not possible, use a neutral background and be conscious of what is behind them in the image)
- Dress like they would for school – not in pyjamas
- Double check that any other tabs they have open in their browser would be appropriate for a child to see, if they're sharing their screen
- Use professional language
- Ask pupils to also be in a shared space in their house, rather than in their bedroom. No pyjamas for pupils either! Alternatively, you could ask them to turn their cameras off.
- The teacher should make use of the mute button. If you allow pupils to comment, tell them they should only talk about school work in the 'Stream' and that you may 'mute' them, i.e. stop them from posting or commenting (see below), if they post anything that's inappropriate or bullying in nature.
- Ask parents who'll also be there to be mindful that other children might see or hear them and anything in the background.
- If a member of staff is delivering from home, record the lesson so there is something to go back to later on if you need to. The member of staff must inform the pupils that this is taking place.
- In 'view-only' Google live streams, pupils will be [automatically muted and won't be visible](#), so you don't need to worry about what other adults in their homes might do that gets caught on camera.
- You might still want to ask for pupils to be on mute with webcams off, to cut risks. Otherwise, no pyjamas for pupils either, and ask parents to be mindful of what they say and do in the background. • We won't use breakout rooms as these cannot be supervised.

All staff to follow safeguarding guidance related to the following 4 key areas:

- Record the lesson if delivering from home.
- Reset the meet link on a regular basis before the start of a lesson (This must be reset if someone attempts to gain access).
- Turn off quick access through the blue shield at the bottom of the Meet.
- Do not allow access into your lesson to anyone identified as “outside the organisation” who is requesting access to your meet.

Monitoring attendance

From the 8 March 2021, pupil attendance will again be mandatory for all pupils and the usual rules on attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct.

We will resume taking our register and ensure that we provide attendance information in an accurate and in a timely manner, in line with any DfE requirements. We will adhere to DfE school attendance guidance and record attendance in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended) for all pupils.

There will be some circumstances where children are not able to attend school and in line with public health advice, have to self-isolate because they:

- have symptoms or have had a positive test result
- live with someone who has symptoms or has tested positive and are a household contact
- are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19)

In addition, pupils who have been confirmed as clinically extremely vulnerable are advised to shield and stay at home as much as possible until further notice. They are advised not to attend school while shielding advice applies nationally. Our school will request from parents a copy of the shielding letter sent to CEV children, to confirm that they are advised not to attend school or other educational settings whilst shielding guidance is in place.

Where any child that we expect to attend school does not arrive, we will:

- Follow our first day absence procedure
- Notify the social worker, if they have one

We request more than one emergency contact for each child (at least two) and regularly remind families to inform us if their contact information changes in our communications and on our school website. In the event of a “bubble” of pupils needing to isolate, we inform families via text message / Parentmail, letter and information is on our website.

**** For secondary schools**.**

During the week commencing 8th March, our pupils will be offered asymptomatic testing on site. Pupils who consent to testing will return to face-to-face education following their first negative test result. Pupils not undergoing testing will attend school in line with our phased return arrangements. Vulnerable children and children of critical workers in secondary schools will continue to attend school throughout, unless they receive a positive test result.

Contact plans

We will continue to utilise our contact plan at Appendix A to retain regular contact with all children on the school roll during any circumstances where children are not attending school due to isolating, and during any further lockdown. The contact arrangements will form part of our school contingency plan.

School will consider which category each child sits within and will follow their contact plan to determine;

- How often the school will make contact – this will be at least once a week
- Which staff member(s) will make contact – as far as possible, this will be staff who know the family well
- How staff will make contact – this may be over the phone, doorstep visits, or a combination of both

When contacting families, staff and volunteers will look out for concerning signs like:

- Children not completing assigned work or logging on to school systems
- No contact established with children or families
- Children seeming distressed or withdrawn during any class check-ins or video calls

We will agree contact plans with children’s social care where relevant, and will review them at regular intervals. Where there are concerns arising from contact or where school is unable to make contact with a family after utilising different attempts, we will seek advice from the allocated social worker if applicable, or EHASH, via telephone consultation.

If staff need to contact a pupil or parent by phone and do not have access to a work phone, they should discuss this with a senior member of staff and, if there is no alternative, always use ‘caller withheld’ to ensure the pupil/parent is not able to identify the staff member’s personal contact details.

Recruiting new staff and volunteers

We recognise the importance of robust safe recruitment procedures and take all reasonable steps to ensure that adults and volunteers who work in our school are safe to work with children. We therefore continue to follow our safer recruitment procedure and part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education throughout the pandemic period.

In urgent cases, when validating proof of identity documents to apply for a DBS check, we may consider, after seeking HR Advice, initially accepting verification of scanned documents via online video link, rather than being in physical possession of the original documents. This approach is in line with revised guidance from the [DBS](#). New staff must still present the original documents when they first attend work at our school.

Similarly, temporary measures allow right to work checks to be carried out by verifying scanned documents on a video call. If we need to take this approach, we will take HR advice and follow [Home Office and Immigration Enforcement guidance](#).

We will continue to do all of our usual checks on new volunteers, and will do risk assessments to decide whether volunteers who aren’t in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with paragraphs 167-172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Staff 'on loan' from other schools

We will assess the risks of staff 'on loan' working in our school, and seek assurance from the 'loaning' school that staff have had the appropriate checks, as well as seeking advice from the Local Authority if this became necessary due to staffing shortages.

Keeping records of who is on site

We will use the single central record to log:

- Everyone working or volunteering in our school each day, including any staff 'on loan'
- Details of any risk assessments carried out on staff and volunteers on loan from elsewhere

Concerns about a staff member or volunteer

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education and our allegations management policy and will act on any concerns about professionals – whether those concerns are about staff/volunteers working on the school site or remotely.

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.

We will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per KCSIE and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct advice for making a referral. During the COVID-19 period all referrals will be made by emailing Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk

Safeguarding induction and training

We will make sure staff and volunteers are aware of changes our Covid 19 risk assessment and related changes to our procedures and arrangements.

All staff and volunteers will continue to receive;

- A safeguarding induction for new starters
- A copy of our safeguarding and children protection policy (along with this addendum)
- Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Basic safeguarding training every 3 years, which may take place online
- Regular safeguarding updates provided by the DSL, at least on an annual basis

We will decide on a case-by-case basis what level of safeguarding induction any staff 'on loan' need. In most cases, this will be:

- A copy of our child protection policy and this addendum
- Confirmation of local processes
- Confirmation of DSL arrangements

DSL training

The DSL (and deputy) must do what they reasonably can to keep up to date with safeguarding developments, such as attend virtual network/ training facilitated by the LA and/or safeguarding partners, read newsletters and participate in professional advice groups. There are online courses available via the RBSCP and LA Education Safeguarding Officer.

Children attending other settings

Where children are temporarily required to attend another setting, we will make sure the receiving school is provided with any relevant safeguarding and child protection information.

Wherever possible, our DSL (or deputy) and/or special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) will share, as applicable:

- The reason(s) why the child is considered vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them
- The child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or personal education plan
- Details of the child's social worker
- Details of the virtual school head

Where the DSL, deputy or SENCO cannot share this information, the senior leader(s) identified in section 4 will do this. We will share this information before the child arrives as far as is possible, and otherwise as soon as possible afterwards.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy addendum will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or Department for Education is updated.

Appendix A

Safeguarding contact with students during full/partial school closure or when children are isolating

Aim

- Ensure **all** pupils have contact from school, according to need
- Learning can continue at home through work provided, in line with school's contingency plan
- All vulnerable families have additional contact and support with any concerns reported and recorded, in co-ordination with children's social care.

In the first instance, school needs to assess which children would fall into the different categories:

Current cases where there is CSC involvement: Children with a Social Worker

These are the children that meet the DfE definition of 'children with a social worker'

- If possible, speak to the child to gain their wishes and feelings regarding support needed.
- On the days that these children are attending school, no further action is required
- On the days that they are absent from school or not accessing online learning from home, usual absence procedures for these children should be followed – i.e. phone call home to ascertain their whereabouts and welfare and informing the social worker of the absence.
- Where the absence is repeated, consultation should be undertaken with children's social care (CSC) to assess and agree:
 - Who will see the child/ren and how often.
 - Regularity of telephone contact and by whom
- If school is unable to make contact with family or has any concerns arising from contact, CSC must be informed.
- School safeguarding team to continue to liaise with all necessary professionals via email/phone. If any information is received by school, eg domestic violence notification, this must be shared with the social worker.
- School to attend any virtual Child Protection conferences, review meetings etc. unless advised otherwise
- Staff to use school safeguarding system MyConcern to record and report

Vulnerable families – including those on EHA or where school is aware of other vulnerabilities

- If possible, speak to the child to gain their wishes and feelings regarding support needed.
- For those children who are attending, no further action is required on the days that they are present.
- For those who are not attending, agree and record a clear plan with any involved partner agencies for:

- Regularity of contact and by whom – at least twice weekly dependent upon needs of the child/family. A member of the Pastoral, Additional Needs or Safeguarding Teams will make contact.
- If school is unable to make contact with family or has any concerns arising from contact or other information received, e.g. domestic violence notification, EHASH should be consulted via telephone for advice.
- School safeguarding team to continue to liaise with all necessary professionals via email/phone.
- School to attend any planned meetings unless advised otherwise. ● Staff to use MyConcern to record and report.

Remaining pupils on roll

- For all children who are not attending school due to isolating or lockdown requirements, irrespective of whether they previously had known vulnerabilities, school has a responsibility to ensure they are safe. Therefore, school will need to maintain regular contact with children if they are unable to attend school due to Covid restrictions. This may include school conducting doorstep welfare checks where appropriate. If school is unable to make contact with a family, or has concerns arising from contact, EHASH is to be consulted for advice.
- Reiterate the same messages you would give to children about their safety during a school holiday, i.e. places of safety, trusted adults and helpline numbers. These messages and contact numbers should be on your website for children to locate should they require them.
- If possible, ask children to speak to a member of staff if they are concerned for their safety or wellbeing in any way during this period.
- Ensure that the school website, twitter feed etc. promotes services such as Childline, Kooth or any others that may be valuable to children out of contact with school.
- Any children who disclose information that identifies them as vulnerable should be moved into the early help/other vulnerabilities category.
- Staff to use MyConcern to record and report any concerns.

Named contacts

- Pupils identified as having a social worker, being at early help or having other vulnerabilities will be allocated a designated member of the Pastoral, Additional and Safeguarding Teams, according to the agreed individual plan.
- Other pupils are monitored through our registers and during online learning. Heads of Year contact families if pupils have not logged on to ascertain the reason. Members of the Additional Needs Team contact our more vulnerable pupils who are not physically attending school. This is daily in the case of pupils with special educational needs who are at home and where there are reasons for them not accessing online learning. ALL CHILDREN SHOULD HAVE REGULAR CONTACT WITH SCHOOL.
- All contact should be undertaken in line with Guidance for Safe Working Practice.
- No personal information for pupils to be taken from the premises (paper copies etc.).

- Any cause for concern must be recorded and reported through MyConcern unless there is an immediate danger/safety risk in which case staff must contact the named DSL and EHASH/ emergency services as appropriate.