

Annex 1



**COVID-19 school closure arrangements for
Safeguarding and Child Protection at
Town Close School
Version 1.2**

School Name: Town Close School

Policy owner: M. Woods

Date: 1st June 2020

Date shared with staff: 4th June 2020

Context

From 1st June 2020 Children in Reception, Year 1, Year 6 and those of parents critical to the COVID-19 response were asked to return to school. Children in other year groups and of parents not considered as critical workers were requested to continue to stay at home.

Schools and all childcare providers were also asked to provide care for children who are vulnerable and/or cannot be safely cared for at home. Schools have been requested to undertake a variety of protective measures and to ensure that risk assessments reflect changes made and link to health and safety. The school recognises that as the number of children at school increases, the number of safeguarding issues is likely to increase too.

Whilst the school’s safeguarding principle remain the same, this addendum of the Town Close School Safeguarding and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mark Woods Melanie Harries		deputy@townclose.com preprephead@townclose.com
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Katie Lawry		klawry@townclose.com
Head	Nicholas Bevington		Head@townclose.com
Chair of Governors	Sarah Anthony		chairman@townclose.com
Dept. Chair of Governors	Susan Jack		Contact via Town Close School 01603 620180
Safeguarding Governor	Sarah Waddington		Contact via Town Close School 01603 620180

Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child Protection Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the Local Authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school or college place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This consultation could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Leads (and deputy) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

Town Close School will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children. The lead person for this will be Mark Woods.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and the School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, the School or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Town Close School will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend school, including remotely if needed.

Attendance monitoring

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

Town Close School and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – the School will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. The School will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend.

To support the above, Town Close School will, when communicating with parents/carers, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at School, or discontinues, Town Close School will notify their social worker.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Town Close School has Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Leads are Mark Woods and Melanie Harries.

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is Katie Lawry.

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example when working from home.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for coordinating safeguarding on site.

This might include updating and managing access to the School's safeguarding procedures and liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and, as required, liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the School.

It is important that all Town Close School staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day, staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to contact them.

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

Reporting a concern

Staff will be alert to children returning to school that may already have an existing safeguarding concern in addition to the possibility that other children may return and identify with a new concern. Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, this includes making a report on the School's safeguarding concern recording form.

They should either pass the recording form in person, if in School, or via email and followed up with a telephone call, to ensure receipt and enable a dialogue to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads or the Deputy Safeguarding Lead.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the School, they should ensure to raise this concern with the Headmaster. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Headmaster whilst away from School, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the Headmaster.

Concerns around the Headmaster should be directed to the Chair of Governors, Mrs Sarah Anthony.

Safeguarding Training and induction

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID-19 virus. However, Online training has been made available to DSLs in some topic areas which can be accessed as required.

For the period COVID-19 measures are in place, a DSL (or deputy) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputy) even if they miss their refresher training.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). The DSL should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter Town Close School, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction. This can be done remotely via Zoom.

Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. When recruiting new staff, the School will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for the setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) (KCSIE).

In response to COVID-19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking to minimise the need for face-to-face contact.

Where Town Close School is utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

The School 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. Full details can be found at paragraph 163 of KCSIE.

The School will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 of KCSIE and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct: referring a case' advice.

During the COVID-19 period, all referrals should be made by emailing Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk. Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current national emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school or college, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, we will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

Online safety in School

Town Close School will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system.

Where pupils are using devices in School, appropriate supervision will be in place and adherence to the School's code of conduct will be ensured.

Children and online safety away from School

Town Close School will do all it reasonably can to keep children safe online whilst away from school. It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs that a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and where appropriate, referrals should still be made to children's social care and, as required, the police.

Parents have been, and will continue to, been in receipt of various communications with support and guidance for safe online use.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the Town Close School code of conduct.

Town Close 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:

- No 1:1s without an adult in close proximity, groups only where possible
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any devices used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms.
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms provided by Town Close School to communicate with pupils

Supporting children not in School

Town Close School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children and young people.

The school will actively engage with children to identify and support any mental health issues that may result from extended absence from school.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or

someone who would normally receive pastoral-type support in School, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person.

Details of this plan should be made as a record of contact.

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact and door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded. This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The School will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

Town Close School recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Teachers need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Supporting children in School

Town Close School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils. The school will actively engage and identify any children that are showing signs of mental health issues due to the return to school.

We will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headmaster 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.

Where there are concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Leads or First Aiders – these should be brought immediately to the attention of the Senior Management team.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Town Close School recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

If the School receives a report of peer on peer abuse, we will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

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 with a concern form and appropriate referrals made.