COVID-19 School Closure Arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection

Caslon Primary Community School

Date: March 2020

Date shared with staff: 2nd April 2020

Completed by Mr T Wagstaff

To be reviewed throughout the period of school closure due to COVID-19

**Context**

From 20th March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response - who absolutely need to attend. Schools and all childcare providers were asked to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home. This is an extraordinary addendum Child Protection policy of Caslon Primary Community school and contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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**Key Contacts**

KCSIE is statutory safeguarding guidance that schools and colleges should continue to have regard to as per their legislative duty and/or funding agreement requirements.

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 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 and act immediately

Key contacts: If you have any concerns about the safeguarding of a child, then please contact the following numbers:

MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) – 0300 555 0050

MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) Out of Hours – 0300 555 8574

If you need to contact school leadership in an emergency, either within or outside of school hours, then the mobile number is 07572 679423

If you require advice or help from the NHS then please contact 111 or 999 in an emergency.

**Designated Safeguarding Lead**

Mr Tim Wagstaff twagstaff@caslon.dudley.sch.uk

**Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads**

Mrs Lynnette Holden-Gough [lholdengough@caslon.dudley.sch.uk](mailto:lholdengough@caslon.dudley.sch.uk)

Mrs Claire Warford [cwarford@caslon.dudley.sch.uk](mailto:cwarford@caslon.dudley.sch.uk)

Mrs Amanda Heritage [aheritage@caslon.dudley.sch.uk](mailto:aheritage@caslon.dudley.sch.uk)

**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. Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability. Senior leaders, especially the Head Teacher and DSL know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those children deemed vulnerable. Inclusive of this, regular contact will be made via phone call and or text message/class dojo to guardians of vulnerable children to make well-being checks and if an offer of a place is required. This will continue for the duration of school closure due to COVID-19.

Caslon Primary Community 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 for looked-after and previously looked-after children. The lead person for this will be: Mrs Holden-Gough.

Caslon Primary Community School will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

**Attendance monitoring**

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-today attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance. Caslon Primary Community School will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school.

Caslon Primary Community School will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend who does not. Caslon Primary Community School will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child and they subsequently do not attend.

To support the above, Caslon Primary Community School will, when communicating with parents/carers and 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, Caslon Primary Community School will notify their social worker.

**Role of DSL and Head Teacher**

According to government advice, 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, the Head Teacher will be available via the mobile number stated: 07572 679423

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

**Reporting a concern**

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding Policy, this includes making a report via CPOMS, which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Headteacher. This will ensure that the concern is received. 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 report the concern to the Headteacher. Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Mrs Steff Sellers

The Head Teacher and board of governors will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

**Safeguarding Training and Induction**

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID 19 virus. 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 Caslon Primary Community School, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction – this may be online. If staff are deployed from another education or children’s workforce setting to our school, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic and will accept portability as long as the current employer confirms in writing that:-

• the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children’s barred list check

• there are no known concerns about the individual’s suitability to work with children

• there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

**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, Caslon Primary Community School will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their 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 Caslon Primary Community School are 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.

Caslon Primary Community 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. Caslon Primary Community 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 advice for making a referral. 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, Caslon Primary Community School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

**Online safety in schools and colleges**

Caslon Primary Community School will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system. Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

All schools and colleges should be doing what they reasonably can to keep all of their children safe. In most cases, the majority of children will not be physically attending the school or college. It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children’s social care and as required, the police. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the child protection policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children’s social care and as required the police.

**Peer on Peer Abuse**

Caslon Primary Community School recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims. Where a school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within of the Child Protection Policy. The school will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multiagency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person. Concerns and actions must be recorded on CPOMS and appropriate referrals made.

**Supporting Children not in School**

Caslon Primary Community School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people. Where the DSL has identified a child to be vulnerable, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person. Communication must be recorded on CPOMS, as should a record of contact have made. The communication plans can include remote contact and phone contact. Other individualised contact methods may be considered and recorded. Caslon Primary Community School and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan. This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL and Head Teacher will consider any referrals as appropriate.

**Mental Health**

Caslon Primary Community 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 at Caslon Primary Community School need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils’ work where they are at home. For further guidance see:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2

**Supporting Children and Adults on Site**

Caslon Primary Community School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students. Caslon Primary Community School will continue to be a safe space for all children 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. Caslon Primary Community School 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. Caslon Primary Community School will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them. Where Caslon Primary Community School has concerns about the impact of staff absence, the Head Teacher will gain advice from the Local Authority.