

Covid Appendix V2

NCEA Trust Schools Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, this addendum has been ratified by the Trustees remotely

5th January 2021

Response to COVID-19

Based on recent Government advice all NCEAT schools are partially open to specific students as defined by the DfE, with the exception of Castle school which remains fully operational. There have been significant changes within all NCEAT schools in response to the outbreak. Staffing in our schools continues to be significantly affected through illness and self-isolation.

Despite the changes, our school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is fundamentally the same: children and young people are our priority, staff are aware to respond quickly and robustly to safeguarding and or welfare concerns and procedures for making contact with the Designated Safeguarding Lead in line with our established safeguarding procedure have been reinforced with all staff.

This annex sets out some of the adjustments we are making in line with the changed arrangements in the school and following refreshed guidance to schools in relation to the full opening of schools and contingency arrangements.

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/education-and-childcare>

The current school position and local advice

Reporting arrangements

The school arrangements continue in line with our current safeguarding and child protection policy (updated September 2020).

The Trust's approach ensures that a DSL, or a deputy is always available while the school is open. In all circumstances staff should report concerns via the Safeguard system, or by contacting NCEAT Safeguarding and Compliance Director via safeguarding@ncea.org.uk or any member of the school senior team.

Further contact details are available on our website ncea.org.uk

In an emergency situation, call the Police on 999 or

- **call OneCall (Children's Services) to seek advice on 01670 536400**

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. All Children's services may be affected by the impact of the virus on staff and an increased demand for services.

Identifying Vulnerability

Based on our staff's knowledge of the children and young people in school and their individual vulnerabilities we have identified the most vulnerable children.

We have put in place specific arrangements in respect of the following groups, as identified by the DfE as vulnerable

Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:
 - children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services
 - adopted children or children on a special guardianship order
 - those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
 - those living in temporary accommodation
 - those who are young carers
 - those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
 - care leavers
 - any students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health
- Children of critical workers may also attend school

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

Every vulnerable child has an updated plan in place which is shared with other agencies involved in their care, including where appropriate their social worker and the Virtual School Head for Looked After and previously Looked After Children.

In addition, all children who are working at home will have regular contact with staff to ensure they are supported and discuss any concerns.

Attendance

All NCEAT schools are following the guidance provided by the government in relation to marking registers.

Where a child is expected and does not arrive, the school will follow their attendance procedure and strategy and contact the family. If contact is not possible the DSL must be informed. The DSL will attempt a range of methods to contact the parent but if necessary, arrange a home visit by the school or another appropriate agency. A risk assessment will be undertaken to consider and manage the implications of COVID-19 alongside other risks perceived to the child. The risk of COVID-19 **does not override** the duty on our schools to ensure children and young people are safe.

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, potential risk of 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 and carers, informing the DSL about any concerns.

Peer on peer abuse

We recognise the potential for abuse between young people, especially in the context of a school closure or partial closure. Our staff will remain vigilant to the signs of peer on peer abuse, including those between young people who are not currently attending our provision. Extra care should be taken where groups have mixed age, developmental stages, are attending other schools as an interim measure and similar. When making contact with these families our staff will ask about relationships between learners.

Risk online

Young people will be using the internet more during this period. Staff will be aware of the signs and signals of cyberbullying and other online risks and apply the same child-centred safeguarding practices as when children were learning at the school.

- Our schools continue to ensure [appropriate filters and monitors are in place](#)
- Arrangements are in place to [review arrangements](#) to ensure they remain appropriate

- The school has taken on board guidance from the [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) on safe remote learning and guidance for [safer working practice](#) from the Safer Recruitment Consortium.
- Staff have been reminded of the risk that professional boundaries could slip during this exceptional period and been reminded of NCEAT's code of conduct and importance of using school systems to communicate with children and their families.
- Staff will only live stream lessons when they are in the school building.
- Children and young people accessing remote learning receive guidance on keeping safe online and know how to raise concerns with our schools, Worry wall, [Childline](#), the [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) and [CEOP](#).
- Parents and carers have received information 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 Trust'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.

Allegations or concerns about staff

With such different arrangements young people could be at greater risk of abuse from staff or volunteers. All staff have been reminded to maintain the view that 'it could happen here' and to immediately report any concern, no matter how small to Sandra Brown, Safeguarding and Compliance Director via safeguarding@ncea.org.uk or the school Principal/Headteacher.

Any staff or volunteers from outside our setting will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of the risks and know how to take action if they are concerned.

We have confirmed the arrangements to contact the LADO at the local authority remain unchanged -

Adam Hall, Independent Reviewing Officer & LADO

Direct Line: 01670 623979 General Line: 01670 624888

Email: - adam.hall01@northumberland.gov.uk

If necessary, the Trust will continue to follow the duty to refer to DBS any adult who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult, and to the Teacher Regulation Agency in line with paragraph 166 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 using the address Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk.

New staff or volunteers

New starters must have an induction before starting or on their first morning. They must read the school safeguarding and child protection policy, the behaviour policy, the whistleblowing policy and the code of conduct. They will be informed and know who to contact if worried about a child.

If staff or volunteers are transferring in from other registered education or childcare settings for a temporary period to support the care of children, we will seek evidence from their setting that:

- the member of staff has completed relevant safeguarding training in line with other similar staff or volunteers
- they have read Part I and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and
- where the role involves regulated activity and the appropriate DBS check has been undertaken by that setting we will undertake a [written risk assessment](#) to determine whether a new DBS would need to be undertaken. It may be in these exceptional times we can rely on the DBS undertaken by their setting.

Our child protection procedures hold strong:

- Volunteers may not be left unsupervised with children until suitable checks have been undertaken. People supervising volunteers must be themselves in regulated activity, able to provide regular, day to day supervision and reasonable in all circumstances to protect the children.
- The Trust will undertake a written risk assessment on the specific role of each volunteer to decide whether to obtain an enhanced DBS check (with barred list information) for all staff and volunteers new to working in regulated activity in line with [DBS guidance](#).
- When undertaking ID checks on documents for the DBS it is reasonable to [initially check these documents online](#) through a live video link and to accept scanned images of documents for the purpose of applying for the check. The actual documents will then be checked against the scanned images when the employee or volunteer arrives for their first day.
- The Trust will update the Single Central Record of all staff and volunteers working in the school, including those from other settings. This will include the risk assessment around the DBS. A record will be kept by the HR department of who is working in every school each day.

