

COVID–19 School Closure Arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Sharps Copse Primary School

Sharps Copse Primary School	
Headteacher: Mike Elsen	
Drafted by:	Model Policy reviewed by ME
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Approved by:	
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Review:	

Context

From 20th March 2020, parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and schools were asked to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response who could not be safely cared for at home.

Schools and all childcare providers were also asked to provide care for children who are considered to be vulnerable.

This addendum of Sharps Copse Primary Schools' Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

Key Contacts

Vulnerable Children

Attendance Monitoring

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Reporting a Concern

Safeguarding Training and Induction

Safer Recruitment

Online Safety

Supporting Children not in School

Supporting Children in School

Peer on Peer Abuse

Key Contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mike Elsen	02392 484545	m.elsen@sharpscopse.hants.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Kate Wood	02392 484545	k.wood@sharpscopse.hants.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Linda Cutting	02392 484545 Work mobile: 07789 552162	l.cutting@sharpscopse.hants.sch.uk
Headteacher	Mike Elsen	02392 484545	m.elsen@sharpscopse.hants.sch.uk
Chair of Governors	Jane Towers		jane123towers@yahoo.co.uk
Safeguarding Governor	Mary Coleman		
School Improvement Manager	Caroline Wilkins	07801403740	Caroline.Wilkins@hants.gov.uk
LADO	Barbara Piddington Mark Blackwell	01962 876364	Barbara.piddington@hants.gov.uk Mark.blackwell@hants.gov.uk
Early Help Hub	Andy Kennedy	0300 555 1384	Andy.kennedy@hants.gov.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 Care Plans (EHCP).

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. At Sharps Copse we also include children under Family Support Services(FSS) as vulnerable.

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

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy DSL 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.

Sharps Copse Primary School will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working 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 Kate Wood.

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 vulnerable, the social worker and Sharps Copse Primary School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19, Sharps Copse Primary School or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent / carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

We will maintain regular contact with the parents and carers of our vulnerable children. We will complete a weekly return to the Local Authority to inform them which children have attended school and any reasons for non-attendance. We also will send home appropriate work and postcards to those who have mentors.

Sharps Copse Primary School will ensure that any updated advice or arrangements from the Local Authority are followed and shared as appropriate.

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.

Sharps Copse Primary School and social workers will agree with parents / carers whether vulnerable children should be attending school, Sharps Copse Primary School will then follow up on any pupil that we were expecting to attend, who does not. Sharps Copse Primary School will also follow up with any parent or carer who had arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend.

To support the above, Sharps Copse Primary School will confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional contact numbers where they are available.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable pupil does not take up their place at school or discontinues, Sharps Copse Primary School will notify the social worker.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Sharps Copse Primary School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and two Deputy DSL's in place for this period of time.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Mike Elsen

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Kate Wood and Linda Cutting

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL or DDSL available on site. Where this is not the case, a trained DSL or DDSL will be available to be contacted via telephone. This can include Jo Stanworth and Amy Fairall as well.

Where a trained DSL or DDSL is not on-site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site. This might include updating and managing access to our online safeguarding management system, CPOMs and liaising with the offsite DSL or DDSL and, as required, liaising with children's social workers where they require access to vulnerable children and / or to carry out statutory assessments at school.

It is important that all staff at Sharps Copse Primary School have access to a trained DSL or DDSL. Staff on site will be made aware of who that person is each day 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

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the Child Protection Policy, this includes logging information in 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 DSL.

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 this to the headteacher. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the headteacher.

Any concerns about the headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors Jane Towers.

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 DDSL who has been trained will continue to be class as a trained DSL or DDSL even if they miss their refresher training.

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

If any new staff are recruited to Sharps Copse Primary School, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction. Volunteers will not be used during this closure.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our federation, 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

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of our child protection and safeguarding policies, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

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 Sharps Copse Primary School will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) (2019).

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

Sharps Copse Primary School will not utilise volunteers during the closure. Sharps Copse Primary 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.

Sharps Copse Primary 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 will be in the school and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, Sharps Copse Primary School will continue to keep the Single Central Record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE (2019).

Online Safety

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

Where pupils are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

Children and Online Safety 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 Child Protection Policy and where appropriate, referrals should still be made to children's social care and, as required, the police.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the Code of Conduct.

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

We are not promoting live streaming as it may cause difficulties for some families and result in inequalities for some of our pupils. Staff may choose to record themselves reading a story or modelling key skills such as handwriting. The following should be considered:

- Staff must wear suitable clothing
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas and there should be a plain background
- Staff must only use our official school platforms (email, website and blogs) to communicate with pupils
- Language must be professional and appropriate

Supporting Children Not in School

Sharps Copse Primary School is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of our pupils.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, we will ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child.

The communication plan will include regular telephone contact and a record of all contact will be kept.

Sharps Copse Primary School and the DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan. The plan will be reviewed fortnightly and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The federation has links to safeguarding information on the website.

Sharps Copse Primary School recognises that school is a protective factor for children, and the current circumstances can affect the mental health of pupils and

their parents / carers. Teachers at Sharps Copse Primary School need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Supporting Children in School

Sharps Copse Primary School is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all our pupils.

Sharps Copse Primary School will continue to be a safe place 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.

Sharps Copse Primary 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 COVID-19.

Sharps Copse Primary 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 and any concerns are recorded on CPOMs.

Where Sharps Copse Primary School has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our DSL, DDSL's, first aiders or paediatric first aiders – we will discuss them immediately with the Local Authority.

Peer on Peer Abuse

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

Where we receive a report of peer on peer abuse, we will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE (2019) and those outlined within our Child Protection Policy.

We will listen to and work with any child, parents / carers and any multiagency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that child.

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