



# Mudeford Community Infants School

## Child Protection Policy Addendum – COVID 19

**Written** : 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020

**Date to be reviewed:** As new guidance comes out during pandemic

**Written by:** Daniel Pope, Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead, in conjunction with 'Coronavirus (COVID 19): Safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers (27 March 2020)

**Reason for addendum:** Interim safeguarding guidance was released by the government on 27 March 2020 as a result of the partial school closures during the COVID 19 pandemic. The school needs to have due regard to this.

Mudeford Community Infants School has remained partially open to ensure that critical workers and vulnerable children can, where required, attend school. The Local Authority is supporting the school in this effort.

### Keeping Children Safe in Education

This is a statutory document and Mudeford Community Infants continues to have regard to this as per our legislative duty to ensure school is a safe place for those children attending. However, how the school is operating in response to COVID 19, may mean some processes are different to normal.

Some important safeguarding principles remain the same:

- With regard to safeguarding, the best interests of children must always continue to come first
- If anyone in school has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act and act immediately
- A DSL or deputy must be available
- It is essential that unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce and / or gain access to children
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online

Mudeford Community Infants School takes a whole institution approach to safeguarding and this appendix will be shared and discussed with all staff. This will allow us to satisfy ourselves that any new processes in response to COVID 19 are not weakening or undermining our Child Protection Policy.

## **Child Protection Policy**

Mudeford Community Infants School has an effective Child Protection Policy reflecting our usual safeguarding practices. However, this addendum summaries any key COVID 19 related changes.

The school continues to have due regard to updated advice from the local three safeguarding partners.

- PNNS will continue to be sent to school from the police as long as no 'out of office' reply is received
- School Nursing Team are not carrying out any face to face work at this time
- Social care meetings such as CIN meetings are not being carried out face to face at this time

The school continues to have due regard to updated advice from the LA regarding children with EHCPs.

- Currently all annual reviews have been postponed

The school continues to have due regard to updated advice from the LADO.

- None received to date

The school continues to have due regard to updated advice from children's social care regarding reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need

- Social care meetings such as CIN meetings are not being carried out face to face at this time. They are available for DSLs to contact.
- No other updates received to date

## **Reporting concerns**

If staff and volunteers have any concerns about a child, the processes have not changed. The concern must be logged on My Concern. If the concern is urgent, this must also be communicated to the DSL directly, either in person or by telephone. Staff and volunteers will be reminded that there is a continued importance to act on any concerns and to act immediately.

Given the very different circumstances the school is operating in, it will be harder to establish concerns around peer on peer abuse. However, the process for managing any report of such abuse will be the same. These will be logged on My Concern and the DSL will take advice from the MASH if necessary. Supporting the victims will be more challenging if the child is not attending school. In these cases, the child would be considered vulnerable and a place in school would be considered.

## **Designated Safeguarding Lead**

There will be a designated DSL (or deputy) each day the school is open. The DSL will either be on site or available by telephone. If the DSL is working from home, they will continue to carry out statutory duties and liaise with relevant agencies. They will co-ordinate a team approach to safeguarding with the Deputy DSLs. A Deputy DSL will take the place of the DSL if they are unavailable and all staff will have their contact number. This might include liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and / or to carry out statutory assessments at the school. The DSL will be available via telephone.

## **Children in care**

Mudeford Community Infants School currently has no children on roll who are looked after.

## **Concerns about a member of staff or volunteer**

If a member of staff or volunteer has concerns about a member of staff or volunteer who may pose a safeguarding risk to children, these will continue to be reported to the Headteacher. If

the Headteacher is not in school, he can always be contacted by telephone which all staff members have. If a member of staff has concerns about the conduct of the Headteacher, they will contact the Chair of Governors ([cwatkins@mundefordinf.dorset.sch.uk](mailto:cwatkins@mundefordinf.dorset.sch.uk)). Mundeford Community Infants School has set up arrangements to support children we are concerned about – vulnerable children who are not attending the school's provision.

### **Vulnerable children**

Ensuring that vulnerable children remain protected is a top priority for the school. Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those with an EHCP plan. We also include and monitor those children who are working with our pastoral worker or the Family Partnership Zone.

Children with a social worker have been offered a place in the school's provision. The school will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This will be especially important during the COVID 19 period.

A 'Safeguarding Response' document has been created by the Leadership Team and shared with all relevant staff. This document lists all of the vulnerable children not attending school with the reason for the school's concern. Children have been assigned a priority – 1,2 or 3 according to their level of need. They will be communicated with in accordance with the COVID-19 safeguarding plan which is an appendix to this document.

If no contact has been made after 3 attempts, two members of staff will carry out a door step welfare visit. If no contact can be made at the home, the DSL will contact the MASH for advice.

All other children are communicated with either by email or telephone once a week by their class teacher and any concerns raised from these calls will be logged on My Concern.

Teachers continue to encourage children to be safe online through emails and their weekly phone calls. Any concerns about online behaviour will be logged on My Concern.

All staff and volunteers will be made aware of this addendum and will be emailed a copy. A copy will also be placed on the communication board in the staffroom. If any revisions are made, an updated copy will be sent. The addendum will also be on the school website.

### **Attendance**

Mundeford Community Infants School will not be completing our usual day to day attendance processes to follow up on non - attendance. We will agree with families whether children will be attending the school's provision and then we will follow up on any child that we were expecting to attend, who does not.

On agreement of a place, parents are asked to complete a registration form which confirms emergency contact numbers and asks for additional emergency contact details where they are available.

If a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, we will notify their social worker.

The DfE's daily online attendance form will be submitted each day by a member of the admin team to keep a record of children on critical workers and vulnerable children attending school.

### **Staff training**

All existing staff and volunteers have had safeguarding training and have read Part 1 of KCSiE. Any new processes will be reflected in this addendum and shared via email.

### **Safer recruitment, volunteers and movement of staff**

It remains essential that people who are not suitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. Any recruitment of new staff will follow the Safer Recruitment processes already in place. In response to COVID 19, the DBS has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking to minimise the need for face to face contact.

If Mudeford Community Infants School uses volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment processes already in place. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Mudeford Community Infants School will continue to follow our legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult.

### **Mental Health**

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. The school is aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work at home. Information about support available has been shared with all parents and these are reinforced during the daily emails from class teachers. Any concerns about a child's mental health will be logged on My Concern initially.

### **Online safety**

It will be more important than ever that Mudeford Community Infants School provides a safe environment, including online. The school will continue to ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect children when they are online on the school's IT systems or recommended resources. The school buys in to remote technical support and they will continue to maintain safe IT arrangements.

The UK Council for Internet Safety provides information to help governing boards and proprietors assure themselves that any new arrangements continue to effectively safeguard children online.

The UK Safer Internet Centre's professional online safety helpline also provides support for the children's workforce with any online safety issues they face. Local authorities may also be able to provide support.

### **Children and online safety away from school**

Mudeford Community Infants School will be doing everything the school reasonably can to keep all of our children safe. The majority of children will not be physically attending the school so 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.

The school will pay due regard to any guidance issued by the DfE on providing education remotely.

Mudeford Community Infants School will consider the safety of all children when they are asked to work online. The school has a Code of Conduct which includes acceptable use of technologies, staff pupil/student relationships and communication including the use of social media. The policy will apply equally to any existing or new online and distance learning arrangements which are introduced. The school will issue a Communication Policy to all teachers to highlight the key points for the current COVID 19 situation.

Mudeford Community Infants School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

The school will ensure children who are being asked to work online have very clear reporting routes in place so they can raise any concerns whilst online. As well as reporting routes back to the school this will also signpost children to age appropriate practical support from the likes of:

Childline - for support

UK Safer Internet Centre - to report and remove harmful online content

CEOP - for advice on making a report about online abuse

Schools and colleges are likely to be in regular contact with parents and carers. Those communications should be used to reinforce the importance of children being safe online. It will be especially important for parents and carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and be clear who from the school or college (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.

Parents and carers may choose to supplement the school's online offer with support from online companies and in some cases individual tutors. In our communications with parents and carers, the school will emphasise the importance of securing online support from a reputable organisation/individual who can provide evidence that they are safe and can be trusted to have access to children. Support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online includes:

Internet matters - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online

London Grid for Learning - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online

Net-aware - for support for parents and carers from the NSPCC

Parent info - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online

Thinkuknow - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online

UK Safer Internet Centre - advice for parents and carers

The department encourages schools and colleges to share this support with parents and carers.

### **School Hubs**

Currently the school is not accepting children from other schools and is remaining open rather than sending children or staff to other schools. If this situation changes, this addendum will be updated to reflect the additional safeguarding processes needed.

**This document will be shared with all staff, and if updated, reissued with a version number and date on.**