



Mudeford Community Infants School

Child Protection Policy Addendum – COVID 19

Written : 31st March 2020 **Updated:** 22nd September 2020

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

Written by: Daniel Pope, Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead, in conjunction with DfE guidance on full reopening of schools.

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 always 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 and we are awaiting review dates for the Autumn term

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 always being carried out face to face at this time. They are available for DSLs to contact. Visits to school from social workers are permitted in line with the COVID-19 risk assessment guidelines and procedures.
- 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.

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

Mudford 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@mudfordinf.dorset.sch.uk).

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 Early Help Team at BCP.

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

The usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

The school will identify pupils who are reluctant or anxious about returning or who are at risk of disengagement and develop plans for re-engaging them. This should include disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people, especially those who were persistently absent prior to the pandemic or who have not engaged with the school regularly during the pandemic.

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

The Incredible Me Project has been put in place to provide extended opportunity for children to settle back into school without unnecessary anxiety or stress. The Pastoral Worker has selected pupils to carry out a steps to wellbeing programme that will support mental health and wellbeing.

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 (remote learning)

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.

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.

This document will be shared with all staff, and if updated, reissued with a new date.