



Limehurst Academy Policy Document

Subject: Keeping Children Safe Addendum
(COVID-19 School Closure)

Date Approved by Governors: 22 April 2020

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Headteacher's signature:

Chair of Governors' signature:

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Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Jon Mellor	jmellor@limehurst.org.uk
Deputy DSL	Vickie Beeby	vbeeby@limehurst.org.uk
	Claire Corker	ccorker@limehurst.org.uk
	Alex Coulstock	acoulstock@limehurst.org.uk
	Ameet Lakhani	alakhani@limehurst.org.uk
	Karen Brierley	kbrierley@limehurst.org.uk
Headteacher	Jon Mellor	jmellor@limehurst.org.uk
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Mark Goddard Kim Taylor	0116 305 7597 0116 305 5641
Chair of governors	Matthew Daly	07980 767 512 mdaly@limehurst.org.uk

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership.

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance [Coronavirus: safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers](#), and should be read in conjunction with that policy.

Unless covered here, our normal Keeping Children Safe policy continues to apply.

The Department for Education's (DfE's) definition of 'vulnerable children' includes those who:

- Have a social worker, including children with a child protection plan, assessed as being in need or being looked after by the local authority
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

2. Core safeguarding principles

We will still have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

Although we are operating in a different way to normal, we are still following these important safeguarding principles:

- The best interests of children must come first
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should continue to act on it immediately
- A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy should always be available (see section 4 for details of our arrangements)
- It is essential that unsuitable people do not enter the school workforce or gain access to children
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online

All documents relating to Safeguarding are on SharePoint. They can be accessed by going to the Staff Hub, followed by All Staff Information and then Safeguarding.

3. Reporting concerns

All staff and volunteers must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this. As a reminder, all staff should continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

The same principles apply for reporting concerns. Concerns about a student should be reported to a DSL. When reporting a concern via email ensure that all DSLs are copied in. Concerns about a staff member should be reported to the Headteacher and a concern about the Headteacher should be reported to the Chair of Governors. Details of all-important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

4. DSL arrangements

We have a trained DSL on site Monday to Friday between 9am and midday. This will continue over what would normally have been the two-week Easter holiday period. DSLs can also be contacted remotely via email. When reporting a concern via email ensure that all DSLs are copied in.

Details of all-important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

We will ensure that DSLs, wherever their location, know who the most vulnerable children in our school are.

5. Working with other agencies

We will continue to work with children's social care, and with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

- Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership
- The local authority about children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need

6. Monitoring attendance

As most children will not be attending school during this period of school closure, we will not be completing our usual attendance registers or following our usual procedures to follow up on non-attendance.

The exception to this is where any child we expect to attend school during the closure does not attend, or stops attending. In these cases, we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, by a phone call.
- Notify their social worker, where they have one

We are using the Department for Education's daily online attendance form to keep an accurate record of who is attending school.

We will make arrangements with parents and carers to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details, and additional contact details where possible.

7. Peer-on-peer abuse

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education when managing reports and supporting victims of peer-on-peer abuse.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately. Details of all-important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

Our expectations of students detailed in the behaviour policy remains the same during school closures. In the first instance parents of the victim and perpetrator will be contacted and signposted to avenues of support if required.

8. Concerns about a staff member or volunteer

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately. Concerns about a staff member should be reported to the Headteacher and a concern about the Headteacher should be reported to the Chair of Governors. Details of all-important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

The Headteacher remains available to conduct any investigation, with the assistance of the Allegations Manager. Please note that investigations may be conducted by telephone or video call if face-to-meetings are not possible.

We will continue to refer adults who have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

We will continue to refer potential cases of teacher misconduct to the Teaching Regulation Agency. We will do this using the email address Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

9. Support for children who are not 'vulnerable' but where we have concerns

We have the option to offer places in school to children who do not meet the Department for Education's definition of 'vulnerable', but who we have safeguarding concerns about. These may be students who have previously had a social worker, who were undergoing an assessment via social care or where staff have raised concerns. We will work with parents/carers to do this.

If these children will not be attending school, we will put a contact plan in place, as explained in section 10.1 below.

10. Safeguarding for children not attending school

10.1 Contact plans

We have contact plans for children with a social worker and children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where:

- They will not be attending school (for example where the school, parent/carer and social worker, if relevant, have decided together that this wouldn't be in the child's best interests); or
- They would usually attend but are self-isolating.

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant and will review them on an ongoing basis.

These plans set out:

- How often the school will make contact
- Which staff member(s) will make contact
- How they will make contact
- Where and how this information will be recorded
- What will happen if we are unable to make contact

Students who are subject to a current Child Protection Plan, Child in Need Plan or are deemed high risk

- A DSL will make phone contact with the family once per week. They will speak directly to a parent/carer and the student. Where the student cannot be spoken to at that time, a specific time will be arranged for the DSL to call back so that they can speak to the student. This will be on the same day. If we are still unable to speak to the student, the social worker will be contacted. If the social worker cannot be contacted, a referral will be made to Children's Duty.
- While the school remains open to students in key groups, families have been advised that the office will be open between the hours of 9am and midday and therefore contact can be made with school staff on the usual phone number of 01509 263 444. This applies over the Easter holiday period too. Out of these hours, families have been informed to contact their named social worker or First Response Children's Duty.
- A safeguarding email address, safeguarding@limehurst.org.uk, has also been made available to these families. Any emails sent to this address can be accessed by all of the DSLs. This inbox will be checked daily.
- The safeguarding email address will continue to be available during the school holidays.
- Planned review meetings will not be attended. However, input via a conference call will be offered where it can be facilitated. If this is not possible, it is expected that the social worker will update a DSL on the outcome of the meeting.

Other vulnerable Families

- These are families who are undergoing an assessment from social care, who have involvement from Early Help or have been identified as vulnerable via in-school systems.
- An email will be sent to the parent and individual student once per week from the safeguarding email address requesting that parent and/or student replies to confirm that they are well.
- Any emails sent to the safeguarding email address can be accessed by all of the DSLs
- If the parent and/or student does not respond within 24 hours, a school comms message will be sent asking the family to make contact with school. If there is no reply, a phone call will be made.
- If there is still no response, the next steps will be decided by assessing the risks involved with the individual case. The actions may include informing any external agencies known to be working with the student and/or family and/or completing a referral to Children's Duty.
- In addition, each family will be contacted on a two-weekly cycle by telephone.

Families of students with Education, Health and Care Plans

- Families of students in this category who do not already fall into one of the above two groups will be contacted via email on a weekly basis through the SENDCo.
- Families of students undergoing statutory assessment will also be contacted.
- Any safeguarding concerns that arise as part of these contact will be reported to a DSL.

Families of students educated via Loughborough Inclusion Partnership (LIP)

- LIP are responsible for maintaining contact with these students and their families.
- Contact logs will be shared with Limehurst staff every Friday.
- LIP staff have the contact details of all Limehurst DSLs and will report any concerns accordingly.

10.2 Recording Contact

A spreadsheet detailing which students are within each vulnerable category can be found in the documents folder within the safeguarding area of SharePoint. It is within in the folder titled Safeguarding Procedures and Letters and is called Safeguarding Contact List.

Each student on the list also has an individual safeguarding log. These are in the safeguarding documents area on SharePoint and are organised by year group within the folder titled Student Safeguarding Logs.

Students who are subject to a current Child Protection Plan, Child in Need Plan or are deemed high risk

- If we have been able to talk with the family during the weekly phone call, an x will be placed in the relevant column on the Safeguarding Contact List. If a message has been left an m will be put into the column.
- The students' individual safeguarding log will be updated to record the information from the phone call.
- Any other contact with the family or external agencies will also be recorded on the individual log.
- Additional documents including minutes and notes from multi-agency meetings will be saved within the individual students' safeguarding folder on SharePoint.

Other vulnerable families

- If the parent and/or student have responded to the weekly email, an x will be placed in the relevant column on the Safeguarding Contact List.
- If a follow up call has been made and has been successful, this will be indicated by a x in the phone column. If a telephone message has been left an m will be put into the column.
- Any concerns, or information over and above that the family are safe and well, will be recorded on the students' individual safeguarding log on SharePoint.

Families of students with Education, Health and Care Plans

- The SENDCo will keep logs of contact made with students who have an EHCP but who do not already fit into one of the two categories above. These will be kept in the SEN area of SharePoint.
- Any safeguarding concerns that arise as part of this contact will be reported to a DSL and this information recorded on their individual safeguarding log on SharePoint.

Families of students educated via Loughborough Inclusion Partnership (LIP)

- The contact spreadsheet sent from LIP each Friday will be saved in the students' individual folder in the Safeguarding area of SharePoint.

10.3 Safeguarding all children

Staff and volunteers are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children at greater risk.

Staff and volunteers will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on students' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately. Children are likely to be spending more time online (see section 11 below).

11. Contact with Parents, Carers and Students

Although education is now having to take place remotely, we will continue to maintain professional practice. Tutors and Year Heads will contact families to support with wellbeing. When communicating with parents and students we will communicate through the school channels approved by the senior leadership team and within school hours as much as possible. School devices will be used over personal devices if possible and school email accounts will be used not personal email accounts. Staff are advised to ensure that they do not share any personal information with families.

If making phone calls, staff will:

- Make contact through parents' phones and if speaking to a student make sure that parents are aware and agree
- If personal phones have to be used, staff will block their number so that parents do not see it, or route their calls through an app that makes calls through the school's number
- Keep a record of any phone contact with any students or parents including the content of the call and the date

A script has been written to support tutors with the structure of any keeping in contact calls that they make.

12. Online safety

12.1 In school

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school.

Limehurst IT Services consists of three members of staff. All are working from home and consequently there will be at least one member of the team who is able to provide IT support.

12.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow the existing Code of Conduct for Employees, the Staff Acceptable Use policy and the policies and procedure detailed in the Employee Handbook.

Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in section 3 of this addendum.

We will make sure children know how to report any concerns they have back to our school, and signpost them to other sources of support too.

12.3 Working with parents and carers

We will make sure parents and carers:

- Are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online
- Know what our school is asking children to do online, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school
- Are aware that they should only use reputable online companies or tutors if they wish to supplement the remote teaching and resources our school provides
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

Information will be communicated to parents through letters sent via email, text messages, the school website and Limehurst Academy's Twitter account.

13. Mental health

We will signpost all students, parents and staff to resources to support good mental health at this time.

When setting expectations for students learning remotely and not attending school, teachers will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health.

14. Staff recruitment, training and induction

14.1 Recruiting new staff and volunteers

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that adults and volunteers who work in our school are safe to work with children.

We will continue to follow our safer recruitment procedures, and part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

In urgent cases, when validating proof of identity documents to apply for a DBS check, we will initially accept verification of scanned documents via online video link, rather than being in physical possession of the original documents. This approach is in line with revised guidance from the DBS.

New staff must still present the original documents when they first attend work at our school.

We will continue to do our usual checks on new volunteers and do risk assessments to decide whether volunteers who aren't in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with paragraphs 167-172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

14.2 Staff 'on loan' from other schools

As the school is currently closed to students, it is not expected that Limehurst will be required to "loan" staff from other schools.

However, should it be required, the risks associated with using staff from other settings will be assessed and reassurances will be sought from the "loaning" school that appropriate checks have taken place.

Where staff have signed up to it, the DBS Update Service, will be used to check for any new information.

14.3 Safeguarding induction and training

We will make sure staff and volunteers are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements.

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive:

- A safeguarding induction
- A copy of our children protection policy (and this addendum)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1

We will decide on a case-by-case basis what level of safeguarding induction staff 'on loan' need. In most cases, this will be:

- A copy of our child protection policy and this addendum
- Confirmation of local processes
- Confirmation of DSL arrangements

14.4 Keeping records of who is on site

We will keep a record of which staff and volunteers are on site each day, and that appropriate checks have been carried out for them.

We will continue to keep our single central record up to date.

We will use the single central record to log:

- Everyone working or volunteering in our school each day, including staff 'on loan'
- Details of any risk assessments carried out on staff and volunteers on loan from elsewhere

15. Children attending other settings

Where children are temporarily required to attend another setting, we will make sure the receiving school is provided with any relevant welfare and child protection information.

Wherever possible, our DSL (or deputy) and/or special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) will share, as applicable:

- The reason(s) why the child is considered vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them
- The child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or personal education plan

- Details of the child's social worker
- Details of the virtual school head

We will share this information before the child arrives as far as is possible, and otherwise as soon as possible afterwards.

16. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership, the Local Authority or Department for Education is updated, and as a minimum every 4 weeks by the Senior Leadership Team. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

17. Virtual Sessions

Virtual sessions will be agreed on a case by case basis following discussion with the parent/carer and any external agencies such as social workers or the Virtual School. Examples of sessions may include art therapy and music lessons.

17.1 Professional behaviour and dress

Although lessons will happen in an informal home environment, it is important that both adults and students follow the same behaviour as they would in the school environment. This will help minimise any safeguarding risks. The following should be adhered to:

- Having a parent or carer within earshot of the student taking part in the online session
- Appropriate dress (e.g. not wearing pyjamas). Both adults and students should wear clothing that would normally be worn in public
- Not taking phone calls, messaging others, or using devices that are not requested by the adult for the session
- Not having other browsers or apps open during the online session to reduce the risk of inappropriate content being displayed when sharing the screen with other participants

17.2 Location of online sessions

The session should be in an appropriate room (not in a bedroom for example), and within earshot of a parent or carer. This will ensure that the student can raise any concerns, whether practical or related to safeguarding.

Whilst space in houses may be limited, and may be shared with others, the adult will work with the parents to make sure that whatever space is available to use is neutral, safe and conducive to the session taking place, does not reveal any personal information about the student and does not present a safeguarding risk.

The space that the adult uses should also be neutral and should not reveal any details about the adult's personal life.

The adult should check with the student at the start of the session if they feel comfortable in the environment and remind them that they can stop at any time.

17.3 Screen sharing and recording

Adults should have a “clean” screen and desktop and turn off any apps that may interrupt the session such as alarms, alerts, or incoming skype calls.

Adults will not take any screenshots of the session nor make any video recordings. Students will also be instructed not to do this, and this will be noted in the guidance for parents.

17.4 Software and Use of Personal Data

Microsoft Teams will be used for all virtual sessions. External professionals will be given a Limehurst Teams account to use, with the exception of the Art Therapist who will use their own Teams account (see Charnwood Art Therapy’s safeguarding policy).

Students will be told not to share any personal contact information with the adult, for example social media names or phone numbers. If there is an incident of a student doing this, the adult will cease the online session and report the incident to a DSL.

17.5 Keeping records

All staff will need keep records of when they have accessed online sessions in order to address any safeguarding issues that may arise.

17.6 Reporting of concerns

Safeguarding during online sessions follows the same reporting process as with face-to-face lessons. If the adult running the session has a concern it must be reported to a DSL immediately. Details of all-important contacts are listed in the ‘Important contacts’ section at the start of this addendum and a copy of this document will be sent to anyone facilitating online sessions.

The parent/carer should be aware that the reporting of any safeguarding concerns is the same as under the Limehurst Academy Keeping Children Safe policy. The parents/carers will be given the opening hours for the office and the safeguarding@limehurst.org.uk email address in case they need to report any incidents.

A parent/carer or responsible adult should be within earshot of the child during the online lesson. Students will be told that if they have any concerns before, during, or after a session they should report this to their parent/carer.

18. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Keeping Children Safe
- Anti-Bullying Policy incorporating Cyberbullying Policy
- Health and Safety policy
- Code of Conduct for Employees
- Staff Acceptable Use Policy
- The Employee Handbook