

## **COVID19 Annex to the Whole School Safeguarding and Child protection Policy**

*NB This Annex supplements the existing policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2019 and is likely to change so please check regularly*

**These basic principles continue to apply :**

- **The best interests of the children always come first**
- **If anyone has a concern about a child and/or family they must continue to act immediately**
- **DSL/ADSL will always be available via email and/or telephone**
- **Vigilance is needed to ensure unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or enter the school site**
- **Children should continue to be protected when they are online**

It is important that our commitment to safeguarding continues during the new school arrangements. It will be more difficult to manage but this guidance reminds you that we all have a part to play.

### **How is Debenham High School ensuring this happens?**

Most students and staff will work from home to ensure that government regulations on lockdown, social distancing and where necessary self- isolation can take place.

All students and parents/carers have been emailed a "Keeping themselves safe" poster signposting where to get additional support around their wellbeing.

#### **1. The School Offer: We are supporting the most vulnerable**

##### **Supporting the most vulnerable students in School**

The school is open for students needing routine and a place of safety – this is for those children of key workers and those who are vulnerable. (See DfE guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people>)

All students are re-offered that place in a Thursday Email from the Headteacher so keeping the offer live and ensuring we know who should be attending. This is sent home in paper form to those unable to access email by the administrative team member on duty.

Louise Ramsay, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and/or Simon Martin, the Alternate Safeguarding Lead (ADSL) are available at all times. If they are not physically on site, their home telephone numbers/mobile numbers have been given to all staff. The school has made alternative arrangements if Louise and Simon become unwell; in this case another member of the Senior Leadership Team will assume this role beginning with Julia Upton, Headteacher.

To protect both students and staff, staff will be working on a significantly reduced timetable based on a skeletal staff in school – including a senior leader; two teaching staff and a Teaching Assistant/Graduate Intern; a member of the administrative team; catering team; caretaking team and cleaning team. The DSL and ASDL will be on call at all times; a qualified first aider will be on site at all times.

All staff and students in school will be provided with a simple lunch free of charge.

### **Monitoring Attendance**

Local Authorities and schools do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance. The agreed list on attendance in school based on the reply to the Thursday email will be filed in School Offer. Non-attendance of any expected students on a given day should be followed up as with usual first day absence checks by the member of the administrative team on duty.

As a matter of course, the member of the administrative team on duty need to complete the daily online attendance form <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings>. To keep a record of children of key workers and vulnerable children who are attending school. This allows for a record of attendance for safeguarding purposes and allows schools to provide accurate, up-to-date data to the department on the number of children taking up places.

### **Supporting the most vulnerable students outside of School – As a school**

The Pastoral Team are contacting all families that the government have identified as vulnerable every week – the offer is being re-issued in person where staff feel the young person would benefit or where placement is strained. A RAG system is being kept live as a log of these calls so student wellbeing, education and placement where appropriate is being monitored.

Where needed, the Pastoral Team will contact other students who may be vulnerable and not specifically on the government list and add these to their call list; other staff members have volunteered to support the team in keeping in touch to make this sustainable. This could include those open to Family Network Meetings previously or low income homes.

The school has liaised with the Co-Op and will provide vouchers to support those eligible for Free School Meals while the DfE mobilise their national offer.

### **Supporting the most vulnerable students – Working with the Local Authority**

The DSL is in regular contact with the Virtual School, giving a weekly update on the Children In Care. Where there is concern the DSL will contact the Social Worker and remain in regular contact with the Foster Carer. Child In Care Review meetings continue via Skype where there is a volatile placement and the DSL attends; paper based meetings take place for more secure placements. Should the DSL be unable to complete this work, an experienced Head of Year would act as deputy.

Where students have a social worker or a Family Support Practitioner, the DSL is in regular contact with them. Social Care teams are also checking on open cases weekly as good practice. Child In Need meetings and Core Groups continue through Skype; the DSL will attend. Only families with the most pressing need are being kept open at Family Network Meeting level to allow flexibility in the local authority so these will be a priority for the Pastoral Team to monitor.

## **2. We are mindful of our duty of care to all staff and students – their physical and mental health**

Given the difficult circumstances in which we live, DHS is aware of additional stresses placed on the mental health of all in the school from senior leaders to governors to staff to students. The school has reviewed the advice from the Association of School and College Leaders for home learning, which is mindful of the different demands upon children and teachers from this offer.

Proactively, the DHS home learning timetable deliberately highlights the importance of mental wellbeing, including advice that students exercise daily, that they remain connected through group activities such as the daily feeds, the weekly quiz, the School Living History Project and a time of community engagement.

Yet, over and above this, any interaction between staff and students will be important in monitoring student wellbeing; this is the main way that staff can look out for signs that a student may be at risk. As when working with students in school, there needs to be the understanding that changes in circumstances; abuse and mental ill health can present itself as challenging or over-zealous behaviour and that either could be indicators of students not coping. Should staff be concerned about a student, they should refer to the DSL; where appropriate referrals should still be made to social services and/or the police.

### **How to make a referral**

In the absence of being able to handwrite a copy, please use the Safeguarding Referral Form attached or simply email the DSL/ADSL with your concern. Please be sure to state your name; your role within the school; the time of the incident/concern.

## **3. Staff will promote professional conduct at all times**

Interaction between students and staff should be conducted with the same level of professionalism there would be in the classroom so the Staff Code of Conduct must be applied at all times.

Contact with students should only be through work email or accepted online platforms; the rules around using social media with students continue to apply. When contacting students, only accepted technology can be used eg not WhatsApp or other insecure chat lines. Professional boundaries must continue to be observed eg Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss X not using first names. Practical guidelines and expected boundaries around working online will be clearly stated and agreed by both staff and students

Staff also need to be aware of their online presence outside of school. Online behaviour should never bring Debenham High School into disrepute.

4. **We will proactively work to keep our students safe online – both as a school and working with the parents/carers**

**Within school**, the IT team will ensure there are appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place to protect students online within school or on recommended resources.

In terms of sustaining this work, there are three members of the IT team in the school and hence it is considered that there is reasonable coverage in the event of ill health. The school also has connections to IT teams in other schools should this present a problem. The online platform to be used after Easter for student learning will be able to be managed by teachers, needing little IT support once set up.

**Away from school**, the increased use of screen time and working/socialising online makes this more risky than usual but also more necessary and life affirming. This needs to be a key area of vigilance of students, staff and parents/carers.

Any online learning tools and systems suggested by the school will be checked to be in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Students will be regularly reminded to report any concerns when working online both to the school and through other national organisations such as

**Childline** - for support

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

**CEOP** - for advice on making a report about online abuse

Opportunities will be taken in regular communication between school and parents/carers to reinforce the importance of children being safe online. In these emails, parents/carers will be kept informed of what their children are being asked to do online, including sites they will be asked to access and who/when they will be communicating with online from the school.

To support parent/carers who want to supplement their child's learning through additional online companies and individual tutors, 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/carers to keep their children safe online includes :

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

**London Grid for Learning** - for support for parents/carers to keep their children safe

**Net-aware** - for support for parents and careers 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

**5. We will work with local schools to ensure information is shared**

As Debenham High School has its own school offer, it is not anticipated that any students will join another school. If this does have to happen in future, it is the role of the DSL and/or SENCo to ensure the new school has any relevant welfare and child protection information. This is especially important where the child is vulnerable. For Children in Care, any change of school should be managed by the Virtual School. At the least the following needs to be shared as needed, ideally before the student moves placement – ECHP, child in need plan, child protection plan, or for Children in care, their latest personal education plan and details of the child's social worker. Should the DSL/SENCo be unable to do this, the Senior Leadership Team would do so.

**6. We will ensure we adhere to safer recruitment procedures and update staff training where needed to keep staff and students safe**

In a time of uncertainty the continuation of these measures is essential :

**Staff Attendance**

From a safeguarding perspective, the use of the staff rota for school will ensure that on any given day, the Senior Leadership knows which staff will be in school. Staff attendance is reported to the DfE on the daily attendance return.

**Single Central Record** will be regularly updated.

**Staff training** will continue. The DSL or a nominated member of the Senior Leadership Team will update staff as needed based on DfE and Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership guidance.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter the school, they will be provided with safeguarding induction. They will be given an updated copy of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and KCSiE Part 1.

**Safer recruitment measures** will continue to be used for recruitment of new staff as listed in Part 3 of KCSiE. In response to COVID19, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) has made changes to its guidance on standard and enhanced DBS ID checking to minimise the need for face to face contact. See latest guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-changes-to-dbs-id-checking-guidelines>

Where Skype interviews are undertaken, ID will be requested to be shown, with follow up scanned copies to be sent in, as per HR provider guidance.

**Keeping children safe through DBS procedures** – DHS will continue to follow their legal duty to report to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult.

31<sup>st</sup> March 2020

DHS will continue to make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as stated in KCSiE. During the COVID19 period all referrals should be made by emailing [Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk).