

## Safeguarding Procedures during School Closure

These procedures take into account the following guidance:

- Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers
- Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on vulnerable children and young people

### Context

From 4<sup>th</sup> January 2020 Secondary age parents were asked to keep their children at home and for schools to remain open only for children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response and children who are vulnerable.

These procedures have been put in place to ensure that all staff know how to respond to a student disclosure or what to do if they are worried about a student in the event of a school closure or partial closure and to monitor the welfare of vulnerable students during this time. They apply to students attending any reopening and those who continue Home Learning.

### Identifying Vulnerable Children and Young People

Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child;
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan;
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:
  - children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services
  - adopted children or children on a special guardianship order
  - those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
  - those living in temporary accommodation
  - those who are young carers
  - those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
  - care leavers
  - others at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health.

The School will continue to liaise with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. They will discuss whether the child is able to stay at home or should come into school or attend an agreed partner school. Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, the DSL or the social worker will discuss these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Any child 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 in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home.

### Identifying Critical Workers

**Critical workers** are parents and carers whose work is critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and EU transition response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors outlined by the DfE [here](#).

## Reporting a Concern

The School has moved to online reporting of all safeguarding concerns using MyConcern. Every member of staff has a log-in and training has been provided. Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

When the site is open to a specific group of students or part of a year group, a member of SG with DSL training will be available on site to support any individual if required. Incidents and actions will be recorded in MyConcern.

All concerns raised through MyConcern will be monitored by the DSL Team and appropriate action taken, with advice sought from Kent Education Safeguarding as necessary. DSLs will communicate between themselves and any referring teacher via telephone calls to discuss best course of action as necessary.

If a member of staff considers a student to be in immediate danger and they are unable to contact a DSL, they should follow the procedure outlined in the School's Safeguarding Policy, seeking advice from the Kent Education Safeguarding Team or via consultation with the Kent Duty Team. Contact details are listed on the first page of the Child Protection Policy. If anyone other than the DSL makes a referral to external services, then they will inform the DSL as soon as possible.

Students and parents can contact the DSL or Wellbeing Team by emailing [support@tgs.kent.sch.uk](mailto:support@tgs.kent.sch.uk). This will be monitored daily and concerns triaged appropriately.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children, they should report the concern directly to the Head Teacher.

### Monitoring Vulnerable Students not in School

All students considered to be vulnerable will have at least weekly contact with a nominated member of staff. Nominated staff members and the DSL have been issued with school mobile telephones so that they can make calls to students without using their personal devices.

If staff have not had any contact with the student over the period of a week then they must contact the student to ensure they are safe and well.

The student can also email the staff member during the school day, copied to [support@tgs.kent.sch.uk](mailto:support@tgs.kent.sch.uk) as this will be monitored by DSLs on a rota, so that concerns can be covered if the nominated staff member is unwell. Any new concerns that arise will be reported via MyConcern.

If the regular contact does not confirm that the student is safe and well, the nominated staff member will contact the parents/carers in the first instance as per any attendance concern. If this is unsuccessful then a DSL must be informed in order to escalate to a Kent Safeguarding Team consultation or Police support.

Any student with a Child Protection Plan will have weekly telephone contact with a nominated member of staff (using a school mobile telephone) who will liaise with the assigned social worker to ensure regular home visits. This is in addition to their weekly email support.

If it is necessary for school staff to visit the home then this should be discussed with the DSL and involve two members of staff, one of which needs to be a member of the DSL Team. The DSL will consult with Kent Education Safeguarding before making a home visit. A home visit will not involve staff members entering a property: it will be sufficient to talk to a parent/carer or student through a window from a safe distance, using a school mobile if necessary. If safeguarding concerns remain, a further consultation with Kent will take place and if required, police support will be requested.

A list of vulnerable students, nominated staff members and contact details will be shared securely within the team of DSLs and nominated staff so that a record of contact and any subsequent action can be made. The DSLs and nominated staff will meet weekly through Microsoft Teams to review procedures and discuss any student concerns.

## **Supporting children in school**

The School will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. We will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

We 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 COVID19.

We will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site that appropriate support is in place for them. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded on MyConcern.

## **Online Safety during Remote Learning**

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

Any contact with students must be through *Microsoft Teams* or by school email. The use of live video must be approved by the SG line manager and follow the School's Protocol for video lessons. A separate protocol is in place for peripatetic music teachers. Protocols are in place for audio calls via *Microsoft Teams* for meetings between individual students and staff for example to support Extended Essay and Individual Assessment supervision.

Where a report of peer on peer abuse is received, the principles outlined within the Child Protection Policy will be followed. The DSL will liaise with the young person, parents/carers and any multiagency partner required to ensure the safety and security of the student(s) involved. Concerns and actions must be recorded on MyConcern for DSLs.

The School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with GDPR requirements.

## **Information and Sources of Support**

The School will make available a range of external online support services and sources of information for students and parents. A summary is available [here](#). An 'out of office' reply to emails will also give links to support services and safeguarding advice.

## **Safeguarding Training and induction**

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020). The DSL will communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

## **Safer Recruitment of 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 School will continue to follow safer recruitment processes.

Where new staff or volunteers are recruited, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our school, we will consider 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 policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current National emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that the School is aware of which staff will be in school. Existing staff must consult with their line manager if they need to come onto the school site.

The 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.

### **Temporary Staff supporting the COVID response**

The School will use temporary staff to assist in handing out and securing COVID-19 test kits to students and staff members. Other duties may be required such as building test kits, cleaning down areas and directing people.

Enhanced DBS checks will be carried out for temporary staff following the School's usual safer recruitment procedures. If there is an interim period when an individual has started their role before receiving a DBS check, a risk assessment will be completed and they will be supervised. Under no circumstances will a temporary staff member in respect of whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Supervision will be:

- by a person currently employed by the School and has therefore undergone an Enhanced DBS check;
- regular and day to day; and
- reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children.