

# Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

SECAT – Thorpedene Primary School



**Approved by:**

CEO, Ruth Brock  
CoT Maurice Sweeting

**Date:** 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020

**Last reviewed on:**

3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020

**Next review due by:**

June 2020

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## Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Steph Champney	<a href="mailto:s.champney@thorpedene.southend.sch.uk">s.champney@thorpedene.southend.sch.uk</a>
Deputy DSL	Lorraine Wenn Julie Seymour Laura Cade	<a href="mailto:l.wenn@thorpedene.southend.sch.uk">l.wenn@thorpedene.southend.sch.uk</a> <a href="mailto:j.seymour@thorpedene@southend.sch.uk">j.seymour@thorpedene@southend.sch.uk</a> <a href="mailto:l.cade@thorpedene.southend.sch.uk">l.cade@thorpedene.southend.sch.uk</a>
Headteacher	Shelley Walsh	<a href="mailto:head@thorpedene.southend.sch.uk">head@thorpedene.southend.sch.uk</a>
CEO	Ruth Brock	<a href="mailto:ruthbrock@secat.co.uk">ruthbrock@secat.co.uk</a>
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Allison Frances	01702 534539 <a href="mailto:allisonfrancis@southend.gov.uk">allisonfrancis@southend.gov.uk</a>
Chair of Academy Board	Stephen Tollworthy	<a href="mailto:s.tollworthy@btinternet.com">s.tollworthy@btinternet.com</a>
LA – Children’s Safeguarding	Child Safeguarding Office Hours Only	01702 534539
LA - Unplanned School Closures	Out of Office Hours Office Hours Only	Resilience Unit - 01702 212580 / 07769 700408 Unplanned School Closures - 01702 215938

## 1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from Southend on Sea Local authority (LA)

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 child protection 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
  - 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 be available at all times (see section 4 for details of our arrangements)
- › It's essential that unsuitable people don't enter the school workforce or gain access to children
- › Children should continue to be protected when they are online

### 3. Reporting concerns

All staff must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this.

All rooms in school have information posters showing the DSL's who are on site each day. Any and all safeguarding concerns should be reported to that person immediately, whatever school the child is from.

In addition, concerns should be recorded on the appropriate schools 'Safeguard Online' software using normal online school systems.

Staff should continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

### 4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements

As a school, we will always have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site. Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

We will keep all school staff and volunteers informed by posters in each class base and office on the hub site as to who will be the DSL (or deputy) on any given day, and how to contact them.

### 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:

- › 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

The following guidance is currently in place:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers>

### 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 doesn't attend or stops attending. In these cases, we will:

- › Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, by calling key contact details
- › 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. This has been completed using both SIMS and Parental details forms completed by Key Worker parents

## 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 using normal SECAT processes and procedures.

## 8. Concerns about a staff member

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 using normal SECAT processes and procedures.

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](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk) for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

## 9. Support for children who aren't 'vulnerable' but where we have concerns

We have the option to offer places in school to children who don't meet the Department for Education's definition of 'vulnerable', but who we have safeguarding concerns about. We will work with parents/carers to do this where appropriate, led by the Senior Leaders and DSL in our school.

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 Welfare Checks

We have arranged for regular Welfare Checks to be undertaken for children with a social worker and children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where:

- They won't 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 have to self-isolate

These checks evidence

- How often the school will make contact
- Which staff member(s) will make contact
- How they will make contact
- Recording date / time / content of conversations and welfare checks

If we can't make contact, we will repeat call attempts three times before contacting social workers.

## 10.2 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 pupils' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately. In particular, children are likely to be spending more time online (see section 11 below).

## 11. Online safety

### 11.1 In school

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in Thorpedene Primary School.

If IT staff are unavailable, our contingency plan is to contact SECAT IT lead [terrydignam@secat.co.uk](mailto:terrydignam@secat.co.uk)

### 11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff behaviour policy/code of conduct/IT acceptable use policies

There are school email addresses in use for contact with parents and families regarding work / learning queries, staff have been notified (in relation to the SECAT Employee Code of Conduct Policy) that no personal email / phone contact should be made with an parents or carers.

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.

### 11.3 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

## 12. Mental health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. Links have been shared with families to the 'Children's Commissioners Guide to the Coronavirus for Children'.

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

When setting expectations for pupils 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.

## **13. Staff recruitment, training and induction**

### **13.1 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.

### **13.2 Staff working on site from other schools**

We will assess the risks of staff working in our school. All staff working within the school are current staff of Thorpedene Primary School. All staff who will be on site have had DBS and enhanced checks completed on them, including additional checks for SLT where applicable.

If necessary, we will also use the DBS Update Service, where these staff have signed up to it, to check for any new information.

All staff have read KCSIE part 1 and undertaken Safekeeping training this academic year. We use Safeguard Online software to report and log SG concerns and this will continue, in addition to the support of the onsite DSL each day.

### **13.3 Keeping records of who's on site**

We will keep a record of which staff are on site each day and can verify through SECAT schools that appropriate checks have been carried out for them.

We will use a daily register to log:

- Everyone working in our school each day, including staff from other school sites

## **14. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the LA or DfE is updated, and as a every two months. At every review, it will be approved by the Chair of Governors / Chair of Trustees or CEO of the Trust as appropriate.