

Addendum to Columbia Primary School's 2019/20 Safeguarding Policy

Dated April 2020

Safeguarding during the COVID-19 partial school closure

From 20th March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, if possible, and for schools to stay open to provide care for a limited number of children - those who are vulnerable, and those whose parents are key workers.

During this time the school will follow the advice of Public Health England.

The aims and principles of our safeguarding and child protection policies are unchanged during this period even though our circumstances are different and may change again.

This addendum sets out how we will meet our safeguarding commitments at this time, in relation to the following:

1. Vulnerable children
2. Attendance monitoring
3. Designated Safeguarding Lead
4. Reporting a concern
5. Safeguarding Training and induction
6. Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff
7. Online safety in school
8. Children and online safety away from school
9. Supporting children not in school
10. Supporting children in school
11. Peer on Peer Abuse

1. Vulnerable Children

Vulnerable children include the following:

- Children who have a social worker
- Children with Education, Health Care (EHC) plans.
- Any other children we know to be vulnerable.

Children who have a social worker: This includes children with a Child Protection Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority. A child may also be deemed vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Columbia Primary will continue to work with children's social workers to protect vulnerable children. This includes working with Tower Hamlets' virtual school head (for looked-after and previously looked-after children).

Vulnerable children who have a social worker are expected attend school, as long as they are not at risk from underlying health conditions. The decision to attend school or not will be taken on a case by case basis with the best interests of the child in mind. The school, social worker and parents/carers will decide together and review regularly.

Children with an EHC plan: The children's parents, the school, and in some cases, the local authority will decide whether they need to attend school, or whether their needs can be met at home. This might involve carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide essential services. Most children and young people with EHC plans will remain safely at home.

Children we know to be vulnerable: Columbia has identified the children and families who are in need of safeguarding even though they do not fit the DfE definition of vulnerable. Senior leaders know who the vulnerable children are and have the flexibility to offer school places to families who are close to the threshold of needing children's social care support.

Columbia knows that school is a protective factor for vulnerable children. In order to maintain this during the COVID19 changes, we will make regular telephone contact with families, (in addition to the weekly class teacher calls) to offer support and assess children and families' wellbeing. This will enable us to sign-post families to resources they can access themselves.

In light of these calls, we will consider carefully whether or not

- referrals to support agencies are needed;
- to step up safeguarding mechanisms surrounding the child(ren).

2. Attendance monitoring

Columbia Primary and social workers and parents/carers will agree whether children (see section 1) should be attending school – Columbia will subsequently follow up children who are expected to attend, but don't.

We will follow up children of key workers (where their parents have arranged for them to attend school) if those children don't attend as we expect them to.

The Department of Education has introduced a daily online attendance form 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 Columbia Primary to provide accurate, up-to-date data to the DfE on the number of children taking up places during the COVID-19 response.

In all circumstances where a child with a social worker does not take up their place or stops attending, Columbia will notify the social worker or the MASH team.

3. Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies

During the partial school closure, day-to-day responsibilities of the DSL will be fulfilled by Olly, the headteacher.

He will ensure that

- he or a DDSL is on site whenever the school is open **or**
- staff have ready phone contact with him or a DDSL.
- need-to-know access to safeguarding records can be facilitated when there is no DSL or deputy on site.
- staff on site are reminded often of their responsibilities in relation to reporting concerns.

Olly and DDSLs will continue to engage with social workers and attend multi-agency meetings, remotely.

4. Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child whilst at school, they will report it without delay to Olly or Lesley in person. If neither is on site the concern must be reported to Olly **immediately** by phone. All members of staff will have the number stored on their own devices, for ready access.

The member of staff may be asked to write down the concern and will be expected to follow up with Olly the next day.

In the unlikely event of staff being unable to contact Olly, they will call the MASH team themselves for advice. The number is 0207 364 3444.

In Olly's (and Lesley's) absence, staff will call the police if they believe a child is in danger or if they believe the child has been subject to FGM.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, this will be reported immediately to Olly. (see above)

If the allegation is against Olly this should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

5. Safeguarding Training and induction

DSL training is unlikely to take place whilst current COVID-19 measures are in place. The need to refresh DSL and deputy training is waived for the duration of the current protective measures.

If new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter Columbia during this period, they will have safeguarding induction.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our school, we will take into account 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. On arrival, they will receive safeguarding induction tailored to our setting in the current situation.

6. Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

When recruiting new staff, Columbia Primary will follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for our setting according to KCSIE 2019.

We will follow the new guidance from DBS re. ID checking to minimise the need for face-to-face contact. If Columbia uses volunteers, we will follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in KCSIE 2019. We will not use volunteers who have not been checked.

Columbia Primary will continue to

- refer anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult to the DBS.
- consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 of KCSIE and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct advice for making a referral. During the COVID19 period referrals will be made by emailing Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk

SLT including the Business Manager will be aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers are in school, and that appropriate checks have been carried out. Columbia will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date.

7. Online safety for children on school site

Columbia Primary will provide a safe online environment for children on site. Where children are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

8. Online safety for children away from school.

Online Safety Support and resources for parents and families will be clearly signposted on the school website. Parents and children will be made aware of how to report online abuse through clear routes such as; UK Safer Internet Centre and CEOP.

Class teachers will try to have conversations with all the children in their classes once a week. Any concerns raised will be reported to the headteacher as set out in section 4 of this document.

Where concerns are raised about children using the internet unsupervised, additional calls may be made to advise parents of the risks to the children and their own responsibility for monitoring. Parents will be signposted to the online safety resources posted on the school website.

Where staff interact with children online they will be alert to signs that a child might be at risk. Any such concern will be reported according to the procedure in section 4 of this document. Staff know that they may:

- only use online platforms and tools allowed by Columbia Primary School to communicate with pupils.
- only use school-registered accounts, never personal ones
- not communicate 1:1 with children online unless pre-approved by the headteacher.

During this time teachers are uploading content to the school's Vimeo account to support children's learning online. Care will be taken to ensure that photos and videos made at home by staff and shared with pupils uphold professional standards.

- Staff and members of their own households appearing in frame will wear suitable clothing in photos or video links,
- computers or other devices used by staff will be in appropriate rooms i.e. not bedrooms or bathrooms
- Care will be taken to ensure that contents of private homes seen on video or in photos are appropriate
- Language used will be professional and appropriate (from all household members)

Website content and Columbia's Vimeo account will be monitored daily by SLT and any concerns addressed immediately.

9. Supporting children not in school

Columbia is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children and families. We know that school is a protective factor for children, and that current circumstances may affect the mental health of some pupils and their parents/carers.

Teachers will be aware of this when setting expectations of pupils' work at home. Teachers will monitor the use of the learning platforms and videos. Where children in their classes are not accessing the learning, SLT or a member of the pastoral team will contact the family and direct parents/carers and children to the school's approved websites and learning platforms.

Teachers who have concerns about children's safety following these phone calls will report immediately to Olly according to the procedure set out in section 4 of this document.

10. Supporting children in school

Columbia Primary will continue to be a safe place for all children who attend.

The headteacher will make sure that appropriate staff are on site and that the staff to pupil ratio is appropriate. 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 appropriate support is in place for children of key workers and vulnerable children who are on site. In some cases this support will be planned for individuals.

11. Peer on Peer Abuse

Columbia Primary recognises that during the closure a revised process may be needed for responding to reports of peer on peer abuse. Nevertheless, peer on peer abuse is a safeguarding issue and will trigger child protection procedures as set out in our safeguarding policy.

If the school receives a report of such abuse, we will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE 2019. It will be recorded.

The school will listen to the child and then work with the child, parents/carers and any multiagency partner necessary to make sure that the child is protected from further harm.