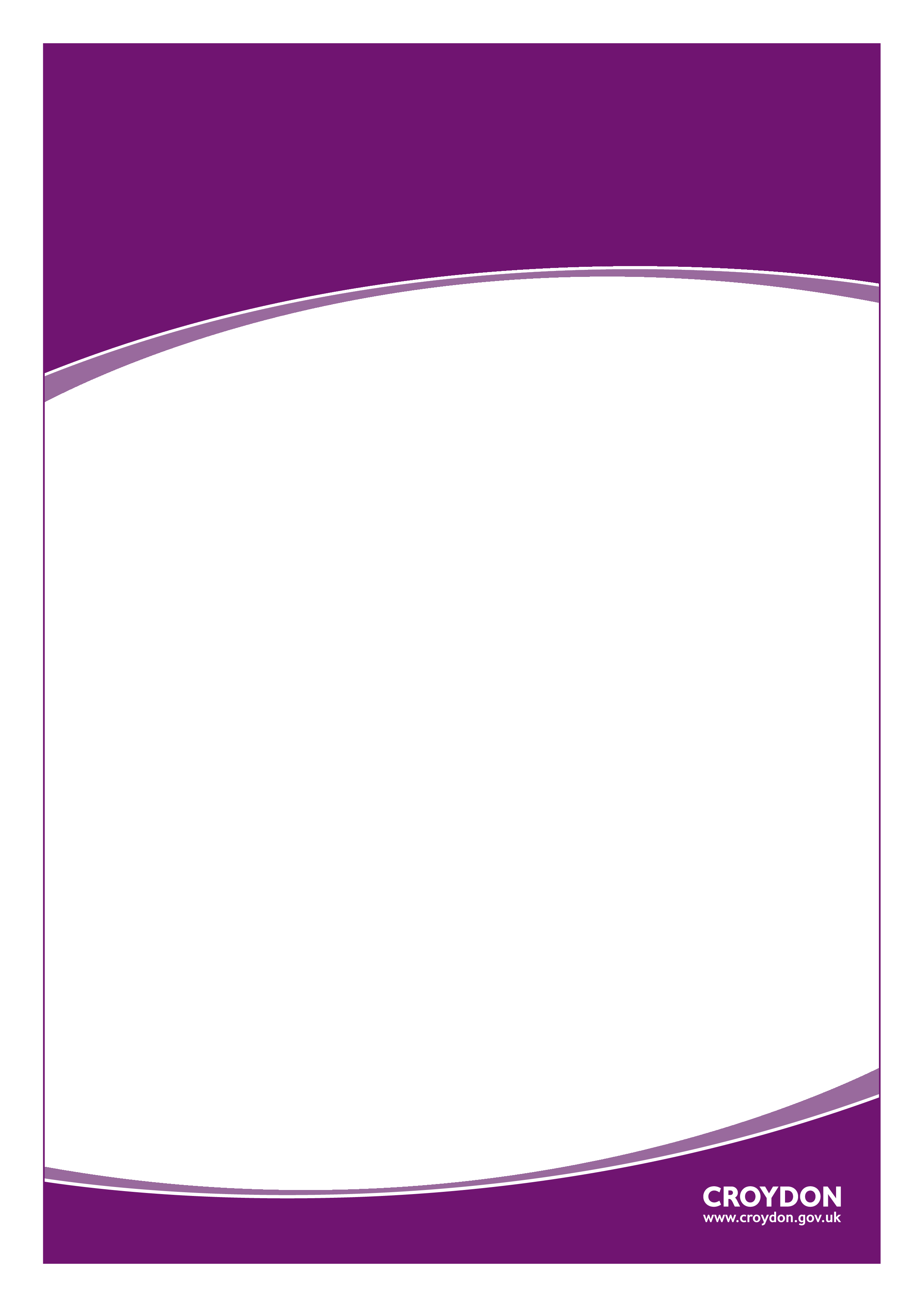
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This guidance only applies for the duration of the school shutdown

3rd April 2020 – Version 1

**Local guidance to schools, colleges and other education settings in Croydon**

**Safeguarding children during the Covid-19 pandemic 2020**

**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC 2020**

The Covid-19 pandemic presents a number of safeguarding challenges for schools, colleges and other education settings. The principles of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 ([KCSIE](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/835733/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2019.pdf) 2019) and associated guidance still apply and in responding to Covid-19 the safeguarding of children must remain paramount.

The Department for Education (DfE) has issued [guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings) to assist schools in relation to Covid-19, including specific safeguarding [guidance](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). Schools, colleges and other education settings must have regard to this.

This document should be considered local guidance to assist Croydon schools and other education settings and must be read alongside the DfE issued guidance.

**If you are concerned about the safety or welfare of a child**

Due to the current situation with Covid-19 Croydon’s Single Point of Contact (SPOC) will no longer be able to base social workers in Bernard Weatherill House to answer telephone calls to the **SPOC Consultation Line.**

The Consultation and advice service however, remains an integral part of the offer and is still available to professionals who wish to speak to a social worker when they need to seek advice regarding referrals.

If you need to contact the SPOC Consultation Line to speak to a social worker you should now email: [childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk)

Please provide your contact details and a brief summary of the advice needed and a social worker will call you back as soon as possible.

The threshold for making a safeguarding referral to SPOC has not change as a result of Covid-19 and referrals should continue to be made in the same way.

**SPOC (Single Point of Contact):**

For urgent child protection matters requiring immediate attention: Tel: 0208 255 2888

To contact the SPOC Professionals Consultation Line email: [childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk)

Submit the online referral form: Click [HERE](https://my.croydon.gov.uk/MashReferrals) for the referral form

Or email SPOC referrals to: [childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk)

Manager: Jonathan Lung (Service Leader, Children & Families)

Email: [Jonathan.Lung@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:Jonathan.Lung@croydon.gov.uk)

**Allegations against a teacher, other staff member or another professional**

The LADO is continuing to operate as normal and if you become aware of allegations relating to the conduct of a teacher, other member of staff, volunteer or another professional you should contact the LADO in the usual way.

The criteria and threshold for contacting to the LADO remains unchanged.

**Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):**

Email: [lado@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:lado@croydon.gov.uk)

Senior LADO: Steve Hall

Email: [steve.hall@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:steve.hall@croydon.gov.uk)

Tel: 0208 255 2889 Mob: 07825 830328

LADO: Jane Parr

Email: [jane.parr@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:jane.parr@croydon.gov.uk)

Tel: 0208 726 6000 (Ext. 84343) Mob: 07985 590505

**Child Protection Policy**

Schools, colleges and other education settings must update their child protection/ safeguarding policy to reflect the changed operating environment.

This can be achieved by means of an annex to the existing safeguarding policy, which highlights any changes to the arrangements in the policy and puts in place any new procedures, guidance and arrangements to reflect revised working practice.

A model annex is at the end of this appendix, which schools can adapt and adopt.

All staff must be made aware of any changes to the safeguarding policy.

The annex to your policy should be approved by the Chair and lead safeguarding governor of your governing body before being implemented. It should also receive retrospective ratification at the next available governing body meeting.

**Designated Safeguarding Leads**

Schools must consider how they ensure that all staff have access to a trained DSL or deputy.

Ideally someone should be on site whenever there are also children on site, however this may not always be possible. In which case it may be appropriate for the school’s DSL to be available on-call or to share a DSL with another school.

If a member of your staff and/or your pupils are attending another school site as part of a hub arrangement then the school’s own DSL or deputy DSL should be available on call. They will have knowledge of any current or historic safeguarding risks in regard to those children attending and must continue to be available to respond to queries from either the school’s own staff members, the DSL on site or from SPOC.

Where pupils are attending a different setting, whatever is reasonably possible should be done to provide the receiving school’s DSL with appropriate welfare and child protection information.

All staff members should be made aware of the DSL arrangements that the school has put in place and how they can contact them.

**Vulnerable Children**

Schools and other education settings provide an essential safeguarding role for all children. However some children are more vulnerable than others. These include children who have a social workers and some children and young people who have special educational needs either with or without an Education, Health & Care Plan. Such children can be more vulnerable at times of uncertainty and change. Schools will also be aware of other children and young people who may be particularly vulnerable but who do not fall into a particular category.

The DfE has issued specific guidance in relation to Covid-19 and vulnerable children, which can be found [here](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).

Schools should identify who their vulnerable children are and devise a plan that sets out how they will work to safeguard children during this period. A risk assessment template has already been provided to schools for children and young people who have an Education, Health and Care Plan that you are concerned about.

The risk assessment can be found at the end of this appendix

It is recommended that children should be prioritised as follows:

* **Priority 1**- Without continued regular contact with this child they will be at significant risk of harm.
* **Priority 2**- Active contact needs to be maintained with this family on a regular/weekly basis to monitor how the family are coping and to escalate if necessary.
* **Priority 3**- Less frequent contact can be maintained due to stability in this child’s safety network.

All Child Protection & Children in Need cases should be categorised as Priority 1.

Schools need to be aware of who their Priority 1 children are and must agree with the child’s social worker arrangements for staying in touch with the family to ensure these children are safeguarded.

As well as the already known vulnerable children, schools should be mindful that the pandemic will place additional stress on families. Some, who in normal circumstances would be considered to have a stable family network, may become more vulnerable as a consequence of the situation. Therefore, schools as well as maintaining contact with their known vulnerable children cohort, should also devise a plan for staying in touch with all their families to ensure there has not been a change in a child’s vulnerability as a result of the Covid-19 crisis.

**Attendance**

Schools do not need to maintain a normal attendance register for all children during the shutdown period. However schools should maintain a record of all staff, volunteers and children on site on any given day. Including those from other schools.

The numbers in attendance at your school should be emailed to the local authority each day by midday. The email address is [educationenquiries@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:educationenquiries@croydon.gov.uk)

When children are attending a school other than their own, either as part of a hub or other local arrangement, the hosting school must ensure it has emergency contact details for all those attending the setting.

**Online lessons/activities and other staff contact with pupils**

Schools are being innovative in how they are continuing to engage children while they are home, with increased use of technology as a means to deliver lessons/activities and undertake welfare checks with pupils. In doing this schools must be conscious of safeguarding in order to protect both staff and children.

The school’s existing Code of Conduct section in relation to the use of technology; staff/pupil relationships and communication; and use of social media should provide a sufficiently robust basis to safeguard staff and children. Any exemptions or deviations to this must be approved by the head teacher as part of an agreed plan.

In the event that contact is required then safeguarding must remain the primary consideration when deciding to permit any online or remote contact between staff and the children.

For example:

* Staff must not contact children on the child’s mobile phones. Telephone welfare checks must be made via the parents/carers contact numbers.
* Staff must not email pupils from personal email address or email pupils at personal email addresses. Any email between staff and children must be from/to email addresses within the school’s email system.
* Staff must not deliver live online activities/lessons on a one to one basis. These must be delivered from school platforms/accounts and there must always be at least two members of staff present online for the duration of all such lessons/activities.

**Safeguarding and school hubs**

A number of schools will choose to collaborate during this period and set up hubs in order to support children.

The hub school is expected to have lead responsibility for ensuring appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place for all staff and children attending that school. This includes ensuring all adults working at school have been appropriately checked.

Where a school is acting at the hub school for children from other schools the children’s home school must also send members of staff to support their children at the hub school. During this period when vulnerability and risk may increase it is important that children continue to have regular contact with known and trusted adults.

**Staff training & safeguarding induction**

All staff must be made aware of any changes in safeguarding arrangements that have arisen as a result of Covid-19.

Where staff are working at another school they must be made aware of the safeguarding arrangements of the school in which they are working.

Free online safeguarding training is available from [CSCP](https://croydonlcsb.org.uk/professionals/learning-development/).

**Safer recruitment, volunteers and movement of staff**

Safer recruitment checks for new members of staff or volunteers should continue as before in line with school’s existing safer recruitment procedures.

Where staff from one school are working in another school further checks are not required but the hub school must receive a ‘letter of assurance’ from the sending school that safer recruitment checks for those staff have been carried out and cleared and that they have undertaken appropriate safeguarding training.

This information should be on school’s headed paper and signed either by the head teacher or the school business manager. The hub school must keep a copy on file.

Suggested text for a ‘letter of assurance’ can be found at the end of the appendix.

The Single Central Register must be kept up to date in accord with normal practice and those staff/volunteers from other schools who are working at your school must also be added to your Single Central Register.

**Children required to attend another school, college or other setting**

Where a child is attending a school that is different to their usual school as part of a hub arrangement it is important that the host school is aware of any relevant medical, welfare, SEND or safeguarding information relating to the children. If the child has a social worker they should know who the child’s social worker is and, for looked-after children, know who the responsible virtual school head is.

Schools still need to have regard to GDPR in sharing information and that any information shared must be reasonable and proportionate. However GDPR does not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Potential issues can be mitigated by ensuring that those staff who support their children at the hub school having moved from their own school know which of their children have an EHCP, Child in Need or Child Protection plan and that any further relevant information will be shared between the two schools DSLs and/or senior leaders.

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Where a child with a social worker is required to attend a different school setting the child’s social worker should be informed. If the child does not attend school that day it is the responsibility of the staff from the child’s school to notify the social worker.

If the child is looked after then the virtual school for the LA responsible for the child should also be informed. The Virtual School Head Teacher for Croydon CLA is Sarah Bailey. Her email address is [sarah.bailey@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.bailey@croydon.gov.uk).

If a child with an EHCP is required to attend a different school then the child’s EHCP Co-ordinator should be informed. Email the co-ordinator directly where this is known otherwise email [senenquiries@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:senenquiries@croydon.gov.uk). The team managers for Croydon’s EHCP Co-ordinators are Ronny Burfield who is responsible for children aged 0-11 and Saskia Van Vliet who is responsible for those 12-25. Their email addresses are [ronny.burfield@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:ronny.burfield@croydon.gov.uk) and [Saskia.vanvliet@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:Saskia.vanvliet@croydon.gov.uk) respectively.

**Contextual safeguarding risks**

The response to the Covid-19 pandemic has increased a number of contextual safeguarding risks and schools need to ensure they are aware of these and consider raising awareness of them in their approach to safeguarding pupils during this time.

If you are concerned that a child is at immediate risk of harm you should call the police on 999

Online Safety

Children will be spending more time online at home and therefore at potentially greater risk from online harm. This is a useful time to remind parents/carers of the support available to keep children safe online.

Sources of support include:

* [Internet matters](https://www.internetmatters.org/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIktuA5LWK2wIVRYXVCh2afg2aEAAYASAAEgIJ5vD_BwE) - for support for parents/carers to keep their children safe online
* [London Grid for Learning](http://www.lgfl.net/online-safety/) - for support for parent/carers to keep their children safe online
* [Net-aware](https://www.net-aware.org.uk/) - for support for parents/careers from the NSPCC
* [Parent info](https://parentinfo.org/) - for support for parents/carers to keep their children safe online
* [Thinkuknow](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/) - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
* [UK Safer Internet Centre](https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers) - advice for parents/carers

Mental Health

Extended time away from the usual routine that school provides and dislocation from friends/extended family at a time of national emergency may increase anxiety levels and negatively affect the mental health of some young people and their parents/carers.

CAMHS is continuing to operate during this period with a revised service.

Croydon Mental Health Support Team (MHST) and Support Engagement and Delivery in Schools (SEADS) Team are continuing to support Croydon schools.

* One to one work with young people and families is continuing via telephone.
* The MHST are running a trial helpline from 30th March, which will be operational during school hours (9am-3:15pm), providing advice and support for young people and families.
* We are continuing to provide consultancy and advice for teaching staff on 07702 339000. If there is any difficulty accessing this phone line please could you alert us via email on [croydoncamhsmail@slam.nhs.uk](mailto:croydoncamhsmail@slam.nhs.uk) with the email subject line **“MHST phone-line help”**
* Croydon pupils also have access to Kooth online counselling service <https://www.kooth.com/>.

Full details of their revised service can be found [here](https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Letter%20to%20partner%20agencies%20COVID-19%20%2826.03.20%29.pdf).

This is also a useful time to remind parents/carers and children of the support that is available around mental health.

Sources of support include:

* [Child Line](https://www.childline.org.uk/)– 0800 1111
* [Samaritans](https://www.samaritans.org/) – 116 123
* [Papyrus](https://papyrus-uk.org/) (Prevention of Young Suicide) – 0800 068 4141
* [Young Minds](https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/get-urgent-help/) Crisis Messenger – text YM to 85258
* [Croydon Drop In](http://croydondropin.org.uk/) (CDI)
* [Off The Record](https://www.talkofftherecord.org/) Croydon

Domestic Abuse

The Covid-19 response will place increased stress on families. In other parts of the world reported incidents of domestic abuse have increased significantly during lockdowns. School staff need to be particularly attuned to this increased risk at this time and the impact that this could have on children.

Support is available from:

* [FJC](https://www.croydon.gov.uk/community/dabuse/fjc) – 0208 688 0100 or email [fjc@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:fjc@croydon.gov.uk)
* SPOC Consultation Line – email [childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:childreferrals@croydon.gov.uk)

**Education safeguarding advice & guidance**

Further advice and guidance on education safeguarding matters is available from [Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership](https://croydonlcsb.org.uk/2020/04/covid-19-safeguarding-information/). Alternatively contact:

* Mike McKeaveney (Head of Standards, Safeguarding & Inclusion)
  + [Michael.mckeaveney@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:Michael.mckeaveney@croydon.gov.uk)
* Chris Roberts (Head of Learning Access)
  + [Chris.roberts@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:Chris.roberts@croydon.gov.uk)

**Model letter of assurance**

*Dear Head Teacher,*

*Letter of Assurance*

*As part of the Covid-19 response staff from [NAME OF SENDING SCHOOL] will working at [NAME OF HUB SCHOOL]. I am writing to confirm that the following checks will have been carried out and cleared for* ***all*** *of the staff at [NAME OF SENDING SCHOOL]**prior to them attending the school.*

* *An Identity Check*
* *A barred list check*
* *An enhanced DBS Check*
* *A prohibition from Teaching Check (if required)*
* *Disqualification from working in Early Years check(if required)*
* *A check of professional qualifications*
* *A check to establish the person's right to work in the UK*
* *An overseas criminal record check (if required)*
* *Health Check carried out / Fitness for Work*
* *References to cover the last 5 years have been obtained*

*In line with school safeguarding procedures:*

* *All staff have had annual safeguarding training*

*Regular staff who will be attending [NAME OF HUB SCHOOL] are:*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***First name/Surname*** | ***Date of Safeguarding training*** | ***First name/Surname*** | ***Date of Safeguarding training*** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

*When necessary, updated checks on current staff are also processed and finalised. In the event that an updated check returns new information we will advise your school accordingly.*

*We understand the importance of these checks which ensure your pupil’s well-being and safety, and to comply with Ofsted's current requirements in relation to safeguarding.*

*This letter is therefore being sent to you in order to confirm our commitment and assurance that all of the above noted checks are undertaken and appropriate records maintained accordingly by us.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Position in organisation/school: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Name of organisation/school: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

**Model Covid-19 annex to safeguarding policy**

**(This may be amended to reflect the specific arrangements of your school)**

*This annex should be read in conjunction with the school’s safeguarding policy and other relevant policies and procedures*

*During the Covid-19 pandemic safeguarding children continues to be a priority.*

*Unless stated otherwise all existing policies, procedures and guidance continue to apply.*

1. *Concerned about the safety or welfare of a child*
2. *Speak to your designated safeguarding lead as per the safeguarding policy*
3. *SPOC is operating as normal*
4. *If you believe that a child is at immediate risk of harm call the police on 999*
5. *Allegations against a teacher, other staff member, volunteer or another professional*
6. *Follow procedures as per the school safeguarding policy*
7. *The LADO function is operating as normal*
8. *Designated safeguarding leads*
9. *We will endeavour to ensure the DSL or Deputy DSL is available on site*
10. *In the event that the DSL and all Deputy DSLs are unable to be present on site on call alternative arrangements will be put in place*
11. *Advised all staff of any on-call arrangements.*
12. *When on-call the DSL and Deputy DSLs can be contacted as follows:*
    * *[INSERT NAME AND ON-CALL CONTACT DETAILS FOR DSL/DDSL)*
13. *The DSL will inform all staff of any changes to the safeguarding policy*
14. *Vulnerable children*
15. *We recognise that all pupils are potentially vulnerable during this period, though some pupils are already known to be more vulnerable than others.*
16. *The school will take steps to ensure all children are safeguarded during this period.*
17. *Children will be prioritised in relation to risk, with actions proportionate to risk.*
18. *We will make the following arrangements:*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Priority* | *Arrangements to safeguard* |
| 1. *Without continued regular contact this child they will be at significant risk of harm.* | *[INSERT AGREED ARRANGEMENTS]* |
| 1. *Active contact needs to be maintained with this family on a regular/weekly basis to monitor how the family are coping and to escalate if necessary.* | *[INSERT AGREED ARRANGEMENTS]* |
| 1. *Less frequent contact can be maintained due to stability in this child’s safety network* | *[INSERT AGREED ARRANGEMENTS]* |

1. *A record will be kept of all contacts made, which will be recorded … [INSERT DETAILS OF WHERE INFORMATION IS TO BE RECORDED].*
2. *Any concerns about the welfare or safety of a child should be recorded and reported to the DSL as normal as set out in the school’s safeguarding policy.*
3. *Attendance*
4. *The school will maintain a daily register of all staff, volunteers and children attending the school.*
5. *The numbers in attendance will be reported daily to the Department of Education and Croydon Council in line with required reporting requirements.* 
   * *For Croydon Council this should be sent to* [*educationenquiries@croydon.gov.uk*](mailto:educationenquiries@croydon.gov.uk) *by midday every day.*
6. *Online lessons/activities and other staff contact with pupils*
   1. *The schools Code of Conduct in relation to use of technology; staff/pupil relationships and communication; and use of social media still applies.*
   2. *The safeguarding of staff and children remains paramount.*
   3. *The head teacher may grant permission in advance in specific circumstances such as allowing staff to deliver live online lessons/activities or carry out welfare checks.*
   4. *These should be part of an agreed Covid-19 learning and safeguarding plan.*
   5. *In devising the plan staff must not be required to:*
      * *Contact children on the child’s mobile phone. Telephone welfare checks must be made via the parents/carers contact numbers.*
      * *Email pupils from their personal email address or email pupils at their personal email address. Any emails between staff and children must be form/to email addresses within the school’s email system.*
      * *Deliver online lessons/activities on a one-to-one basis. These must be delivered from school accounts/platforms and there must always be at least two members of staff online for the duration of all such lessons/activities.*
7. *Safer recruitment*
   1. *Safer recruitment checks will continue for new staff and volunteers as before in line with the school safer recruitment policy*
   2. *All new staff and volunteers must undertake safeguarding training*
8. *Safeguarding when acting as a hub school*
   1. *The head teacher in agreeing to act as a hub must ensure that:*
      * *The school that is sending children to the hub school also sends appropriate staff to support the children in attendance at the hub school.*
      * *Every day all staff, volunteers and children at the school are aware of the safeguarding arrangements at the school.*
      * *All staff and volunteers working at the school from other schools have satisfactorily cleared all required safer recruitment checks and undergone safeguarding training in the last 12 months. This can be done by way of a letter of assurance from the sending school.*
      * *Staff and volunteers from other schools are added to the Single Central Register.*
      * *They have emergency contact information for all staff, volunteers and children in attendance at the school.*
      * *They have emergency contact details for a member of the sending schools senior leadership team and their on call DSL.*
      * *They have appropriate SEND, medical, safeguarding and welfare information in respect of any vulnerable children attending the school*
9. *Safeguarding when sending your pupils to a hub school*
   1. *The head teacher in sending pupils to attend a hub school must ensure that:*
      * *They send appropriate staff to support your school’s children while they are attending the hub school.*
      * *Such staff must have satisfactorily cleared all safer recruitment checks and undergone safeguarding training in the last 12 months.*
      * *They provide the hub school with a letter of assurance regarding safer recruitment checks and safeguarding training.*
      * *Your staff and the hub school have emergency contact details for a member of the school’s senior leadership and team and on call DSL.*
      * *Your staff and hub school have emergency contact information for all children expected to attend the hub provision.*
      * *Your staff and the hub school have appropriate SEND, medical, safeguarding and welfare information in respect of any vulnerable children attending the hub schools.*
      * *That other involved professionals are made aware that the child will be attending a different school as part of a hub school arrangement.*
10. *Contextual safeguarding information*
    1. *The designated safeguarding lead for the school will ensure:*
       * *All staff and volunteers are aware of the increased contextual safeguarding risks associated with Covid-19 in respect of online safety, mental health and domestic abuse.*
       * *Parents/carers and children are given appropriate information in relation to the increased contextual safeguarding risks associated with Covid-19 in respect of online safety, mental health and domestic abuse.*

*This annex must be approved by the chair and lead governor for safeguarding prior to being implemented. It should then go to the next governing body for formal ratification.*

*Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Print name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Print name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Designation: Governing body chair Designation: Lead governor for safeguarding*

*Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

**Guidance on Vulnerable Children & Young People with an EHCP**

**Collaborative risk assessment for school and parents**

<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>

Government advice States:

Those with an EHC plan should be **risk-assessed by their school or college** in consultation with the local authority (LA) and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school or college place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

This template is for complex cases or where there is a concern regarding the offer of education.

If considering sending the child or young person to school, school staff should consider with the child’s parents/cares (and where relevant the allocated social worker) about the following risks across home and school contexts:

* Risks to the CYP, including their physical health and emotional wellbeing.
* Risks to the family, including their physical health and emotional wellbeing.
* Risks to the setting, including the safety of other CYP and adults.

Factors to consider:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Advantages of staying at home** | **Potential risks of staying at home** |
| Minimises risk to the CYP’s health, especially for those with underlying health conditions.  CYP is with familiar people at an unsettling time.  Familiar settings and possessions can support with emotional regulation  School staff and other health and care professionals involved with child may be able to provide remote support. | Will the CYP’s care needs be met? What needs to change so that they can be?  Strain to family of having to care for child around the clock.  Potential risk to siblings and parents, if CYP has behaviours of concern.  Guidance asks us to consider: the ability of the individual’s parents or home to ensure their health and care needs can be met safely  Guidance asks us to consider: the potential impact to the individual’s wellbeing of changes to routine or the way in which provision is delivered |
| **Potential risks of being at school** | **Potential advantages of being at school** |
| Risk of catching virus, given close proximity to large group of adults and other CYP, many of whom are children of frontline key workers.  Guidance asks us to consider: the potential health risks to the individual from COVID-19, bearing in mind any underlying health conditions. This must be on an individual basis with advice from an appropriate health professional where required  Staffing capacity may mean the setting cannot safely meet CYP’s needs.  School routine is significantly different, which is likely to cause confusion and distress for CYP with SEND.  Absence of adults who have a relationship with the CYP, potentially increasing distress and reducing effectiveness of care.  Setting may have reduced capacity and/or knowledge to positively manage complex SEND including behaviours of concern putting other CYP and adults at risk. | Continued routine may reduce confusion and distress to child.  Staff have training on approaches and strategies that support emotional regulation.  Protective for families at risk of family breakdown.  Protects child, siblings or other family members from risk involved in staying at home.    Social contact- though this may not be with familiar peers or adults, and could pose significant physical health risks. |

Template assessment grid, for use by schools and families:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Advantages of staying at home** | **Potential risks of staying at home** |
|  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Potential risks of being at school** | **Potential advantages of being at school** |
|  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Outcome of Assessment: Decision which best fits the best interests of the child | | | | | |
| School | Tick | Home | | | Tick |
|  |  |
| Transport arrangements (if attending school) | | | Tick | Tick | |
| Does the pupil receive transport assistance from the local authority? | | |  |  | |
| Have you informed the Transport Department | | |  |  | |
| Communication with Local Authority | | | | | |
| Have you informed  [senenquiries@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:senenquiries@croydon.gov.uk) (or child’s EHC Co-ordinator, if known) | | |  |  | |
| Have you informed Children’s Social Care – allocated Social Worker | | |  |  | |