



Halley
House School
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COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Halley House School

This document forms an extraordinary amendment to the policy already in place

and is operational from 31st March 2020 for as long as required

Document may be subject to updates if situation changes

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| School Name: | Halley House School |
| Policy owner: | Claire Syms, Headteacher |
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Contents

| | |
|---|----------|
| Context | 3 |
| Pupils on site | 4 |
| Attendance Monitoring..... | 5 |
| Reporting concerns | 5 |
| Safeguarding all pupils | 5 |
| Online safety and providing off site teaching | 5 |
| Safer Recruitment/Volunteers and Movement of Staff | 6 |
| Safeguarding Training and Induction..... | 7 |
| Peer on peer abuse..... | 7 |
| Domestic abuse | 8 |
| Support services information..... | 8 |

Context

From 20th March 2020 schools have been required to close to the majority of pupils and to remain open only for the children of identified essential workers (related to the COVID-19 virus and emergency measures in place) and some groups of pupils identified as particularly vulnerable who cannot be safely cared for at home.

This document forms part of the school's Children Protection and Safeguarding policy and contains the adjustments the school is making to operational practice and safeguarding practice during the COVID -19 emergency measures. It is written in line with Government guidance **Coronavirus (COVID – 19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers – published 27th March 2020**.

This document will be kept under review and amended if necessary if further guidance is issued by the Government. If the situation arises where the school either hosts as a cluster school, or where pupils from the school are educated at another local school as a result of local cluster arrangements all schools involved will uphold the principles in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) Sept 2019 and this policy.

The way in which the school is currently operating in response to COVID-19 is fundamentally different to how we would normally operate, however, a number of important safeguarding principles remain the same:

- The welfare of children remains our key priority;
- The best interests of children will always continue to come first;
- If any staff member or volunteer has a safeguarding concern about any child, they will continue to respond appropriately, pass on concerns to the DSL and appropriate and timely action will be taken
- A DSL or deputy will be available, either onsite or remotely;
- Unsuitable people will not be allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children;
- Children will continue to be protected when they are online.

Key contacts

| Role | Name | Contact number | Email |
|---|---|-------------------------------|--|
| Designated Safeguarding Lead | Mr. Toby Oxford (DHT) | 020 7504 0548 07764 969803 | toxford@halleyhouseschool.org.uk |
| Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads | Ms. Claire Syms (HT) Mrs. Soozii Lim (AHT) | 020 7504 0548 07764 969803 | head@halleyhouseschool.org.uk slim@halleyhouseschool.org.uk |
| Additional DDSL-trained staff (Phase Leaders) | Ms. Debbie Ashley (EYFS) Ms. Natalie Andrew (KS1) Ms. Michelle Clarke (LKS2) | 020 7504 0548 | dashley@halleyhouseschool.org.uk nandrew@halleyhouseschool.org.uk mclarke@halleyhouseschool.org.uk |
| Headteacher | Ms. Claire Syms | 020 7504 0548 | head@halleyhouseschool.org.uk |
| HHS Chair of Advisers | Mr. Nick Walters | 07704 715367 | nickrwalters@googlemail.com |
| HHS Safeguarding Advisers | Mr. Nick Walters Ms. Rose Ferguson | 020 7504 0438 | office@halleyhouseschool.org.uk |
| BPET Chief Executive | Mr. Mark Greatrex | 020 3108 0363 | Mark.Greatrex@BPET.co.uk |
| BPET Safeguarding Governor / Auditor | Mr. Chris Sanderson | 020 3108 0363 | office@BPET.co.uk |
| BPET Safeguarding Trustee | Mr. Steven Wade | 020 8939 3890 | swade@blvue.com |

We will endeavour to have a trained DSL available to staff at all times. Wherever possible this person will be onsite and where this is not possible they will be available to be contacted via mobile or online video link. Staff have been provided with contact details for all key members of staff.

The DSL or DDSL will take responsibility for the co-ordinating of safeguarding onsite. Duties will include:

- Managing access to child protection files;
- Liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy);
- As required, liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school;
- Reporting any changes or concerns;
- Ensuring site safeguarding checks are carried out and recorded.

Pupils on site

Pupils with a parent or carer who is a critical worker should be offered a school place if they cannot be cared for at home.

Pupils who meet the vulnerable children definition, that is

- Those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP)
- Those who have a social worker include those who are subject to a Child Protection Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority.
- A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

The school also has flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support or where there are other significant concerns about their wellbeing.

The DSL and Designated Team members are aware of the most vulnerable children and have ensured that those pupils who meet the criteria have been offered places during this period.

Halley House School has repeatedly requested and recorded the most up to date contact details for all pupils prior to closure to enable the most effective contact with pupils and families during this difficult time. Provision for any changes or updates to contact details has also been made.

The school continues to work with and support children's social care to help protect vulnerable children. We expect those pupils identified as vulnerable children to attend school, provided they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. In circumstances where the parent does not want to allow their child to attend school we are working with the family and the allocated social worker to encourage attendance. Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, Halley House School and/or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England. If required, risk assessments have been carried out to ensure any risks have been fully considered and the most appropriate plan put in place.

Non-attendance will be followed up in accordance with usual procedures.

The school will notify the allocated social worker if any vulnerable child expected in school fails to attend.

The school has carried out risk assessments for each pupil with an EHCP (in consultation with the Hackney and parents) to decide whether they should be offered a school place during the COVID-19 crisis 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. These assessments will be revisited if individual circumstances change, or if Government guidance is updated.

Eligibility for free school meals (FSM) is not a determining factor in assessing vulnerability in terms of COVID-19 criteria. However, the school recognises that families whose children qualify for FSM may be experiencing particular challenges during this crisis, and have made arrangements to ensure that FSM children either have access to a meal, suitable supplies (e.g. a 10-day 'hamper') or are provided with food vouchers.

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

School 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 COVID-19.

Where Halley House School has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Leads or first aiders – we will discuss them immediately with the Trust.

Attendance Monitoring

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance.

The Department of Education has introduced a [daily online attendance form](#) to keep a record of children of critical workers and vulnerable children who are attending school. This allows for a record of attendance for safeguarding purposes and allows Halley House School to provide accurate, up-to-date data to the department on the number of children taking up places.

The school has set up systems to ensure all vulnerable children and their families not in attendance are contacted on a regular basis, to monitor their wellbeing and provide an opportunity for any concerns the child or family have to be shared. The school has ensured that those staff members responsible for making contact with families have been provided with advice about how to conduct their contact with families and given key information about families and professional networks to facilitate any necessary contact. Guidance has been provided to schools about keeping in touch with vulnerable pupils.

Reporting concerns

If any member of staff or volunteer becomes aware of a safeguarding concern about a pupil or family, they will record it in the usual way according to school procedures (CPOMS) and pass it on to the DSL so that appropriate decisions and actions can be taken. The route to making a referral to FAST is currently unchanged.

If there is a safeguarding concern or allegation about a member of staff or volunteer, the Headteacher or DSL will be informed immediately so that the matter can be investigated. The LADO will be consulted, or a referral made to LADO, as per usual guidance. The LADO service is contactable via telephone and email as usual.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

The whistleblowing policy remains in place and can be followed by any staff member or volunteer if required.

Safeguarding all pupils

The school remains committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of **all** pupils and recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people. The current circumstances create some unusual challenges in ensuring children have access to safe adults outside their immediate family in whom they can confide any worries or fears. We also recognise that many families are under immense pressure in the current situation, both emotionally and financially, which will mean that not every home is a place of safety for children and young people. Some may be confined to small living spaces or may be witnessing or subjected to abusive situations. All staff need to be aware of individual circumstances when setting expectations of pupils' work when they are at home.

The school has ensured that all families have been provided with information about how to contact staff members during the school closures and that contact details for key support services and helplines have been included in information sent out and provided on school websites.

Online safety and providing off site teaching

All staff who interact with children and young people, including online, will continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk.

Halley House School will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system. Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place. Online teaching should follow usual principles for safe and acceptable use of technology. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Acceptable use of technologies
- Staff pupil/student online relationships
- Communication, including the use of social media
- Minimum expectations
- Online safety
- Essential rules for remote teaching

Halley House School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements. Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- No 1:1s, groups only
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred.
- The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms provided by Halley House School or Bellevue Place Education Trust to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

The school has communicated basic information to parents where online learning platforms are being used, which has included:

- Confirmation of online tools and or sites that the school will be using/if using
- Confirmation of what the child may be asked to do online
- Confirmation as to who their child will be interacting with online
- Confirmation as to whether other pupils will be able to access their child via the online platform
- Allowing the parent or carer the opportunity to voice any concerns
- The importance of not leaving the child alone during screen time
- Monitoring the search history
- Maintaining open communication with the child about online safety
- How to report a concern

Parents and carers have also been provided with details and links to support services, such as Internet Matters, LGFL, Net-aware, ThinkUKnow, Safer Internet Centre.

The school recognises that not all children will have access to a computer or internet facilities in the home, and has ensured that age appropriate resources have been provided for any child who needs them.

Safer Recruitment/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, Halley House will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2019).

In response to COVID-19, 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.

Where Halley House School is utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity. Any new staff or volunteers will be checked in line with relevant processes and details recorded on the Single Central Record in the usual way.

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

For staff movement within the Trust, schools should seek assurance from the People & Business Support Manager that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training.

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of Halley House School's Safeguarding & Child Protection policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

Halley House 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. Full details can be found at paragraph 163 of KCSIE.

Halley House School will continue to 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 COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current National emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, Halley House School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE (Sept 2019).

Safeguarding Training and Induction

DSL training is unlikely to take place at present. The Government have advised that any DSL (or deputy) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL even if they miss their refresher training.

If any staff member requires initial DSL training during this period, as they need to take on DSL responsibilities they have not previously had, the school will take advice from the Safeguarding in Education Advisor and an appropriate level of input will be provided. The school currently has 6 appropriately trained (to DSL level) members of staff.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019). The DSL should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

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

Peer on peer abuse

The school recognises that during the closure / partial closure there is an increased opportunity for peer on peer abuse to take place. We will continue to remain vigilant to any signs of such abuse, listen to and work with any child who may have suffered abuse from a peer, their parents and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of the child or young person concerned.

Domestic abuse

Hackney's Project Encompass (sharing of police notifications relating to attendance at domestic Incidents with DSL in schools) continues to operate during the COVID-19 pandemic. Notifications are shared electronically with the DSL.

Support services information

All support services have adapted their working protocols to provide best possible input for children, young people and families during the COVID-19 pandemic. The school will ensure they access any guidance and updates in relation to national and local services and circulate as appropriate to staff members.

Some useful links are:

ChildLine: 0800 1111 who are operating a 9am – Midnight service in response to COVID-19.

UK Safer Internet Centre: <https://reportharmfulcontent.com/report/>

CEOP: <https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/>

Young Minds Crisis Messenger: 85258 – free text service for 24/7 support

NSPCC Helpline: Phone: 0808 800 5000, Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Mind: www.mind.org.uk

The Department for Education COVID-19 helpline:

Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

Telephone: 0800 046 8687

Lines are open Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm and weekends 10am to 4pm.

City & Hackney Safeguarding Children's Partnership contingency plans:

<http://www.chscb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/V2CHSCP-Contingency-Plans-COVID-19.pdf>