



Temporary Policy Addendum:

COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Vernon Primary School

This Policy addendum is effective from 4th January 2021

Context

From 4th January 2021 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for vulnerable children and those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response - who absolutely need to attend. All other pupils will receive remote education.

Key contacts

Remain as per the School Safeguarding Policy.

Role	Name	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Joanne Carvell	head@vernonprimary.cheshire.sch.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Kerry Walmsley	kerry.walmsley@vernonprimary.cheshire.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Sarah Kiely	sarah.kiely@vernonprimary.cheshire.sch.uk
Headteacher	Joanne Carvell	head@vernonprimary.cheshire.sch.uk
Chair of Governors	Ashley Hickson	ashley.hickson@vernonprimary.cheshire.sch.uk
Safeguarding Governor	Pauline Jones	pauline.jones@vernonprimary.cheshire.sch.uk

Vulnerable children

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; those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the Local Authority and parents, to decide whether they can safely continue to be offered a school or college place in order to meet their needs, or whether they need to have their needs met at home.
- 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.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself is not a determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

Vernon Primary School will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children. The lead person for this will be: Mrs Joanne Carvell

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at increased risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and Vernon Primary School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19, Vernon Primary School or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Vernon Primary School will encourage our vulnerable children to attend school, including remotely if needed.

Attendance monitoring

Children for whom on-site provision is being provided should be recorded in line with the normal school attendance requirements.

For all other children, those children being educated virtually, a register of engagement will be taken and follow up will take place for those children who do not engage and the parent has not explained their non-engagement.

Vernon Primary School and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – Vernon Primary School will then follow

up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. Phone calls will be made to the parents/carers in these circumstances.

To support the above, Vernon Primary School will, when communicating with parents/carers and carers, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, Vernon Primary School will notify their social worker/family service worker or identified lead professional.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Vernon Primary School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Mrs Joanne Carvell & Mrs Kerry Walmsley

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Mrs Sarah Kiely

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example when working from home.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

This might include updating and managing access to child protection online management system, CPOMS, and liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and, as required, liaising with children's social workers/other key workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school.

Vernon Primary School staff and volunteers will have access to a trained DSL (or deputy).

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding Policy, this includes making a report via CPOMS, which can be done remotely.

If a concern is raised out of hours, the staff member should report the concern on CPOMS and alert the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy using the contacts outlined in the school safeguarding policy. If a response is not received, you must continue to exhaust all contacts in the key contact section of the school child protection policy.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Headteacher or Deputy. This will ensure that the concern is received.

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

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concerns to the Headteacher. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the headteacher.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Ashley Hickson.

Safeguarding Training and induction

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020).

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

Safer recruitment

When recruiting new staff, Vernon Primary School 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 (2020) (KCSIE).

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.

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

Where Vernon Primary School are 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.

Vernon Primary 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.

Vernon Primary 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 pandemic, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school is aware, on any given day, which staff will be in the school, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity.

As such, Vernon Primary School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

Online safety in school

Vernon Primary 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.

Children and online safety away from school

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

Online teaching will follow the principles as set out in the school's Remote Learning Policy.

Vernon Primary School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Supporting children not in school

Vernon Primary School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children whether they are attending school or not.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person.

Details of this plan must be recorded on CPOMS, as should a record of contact made.

The communication plans can include remote contact, phone contact, email contact and door-step visits. Other individualised contact should be considered e.g. video contact.

This plan must be reviewed regularly and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

Vernon Primary School recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers.

Teachers at Vernon Primary School are aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Supporting children in school

Vernon Primary School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

Vernon Primary 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. Covid-19 risk assessments will be updated regularly.

Vernon Primary 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 COVID19.

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

Allegations of Abuse

Vernon Primary School recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of abuse and supporting victims.

Should we receive such a report staff will follow the principles as set out in KCSIE and those outlined within our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The school will listen and work with the child, parents/carers and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns must be shared with the DSL as per normal safeguarding reporting processes and actions recorded.

Policy Date: January 2021

Review date: January 2022

Ratified by Governors: January 2021 (pending approval)