



OUNDLE

School



Laxton
Junior School

OUNDLE

Safeguarding Policy: COVID-19 Addendum

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Context
3. Designated Safeguarding Leads
4. Reporting a concern
5. Safeguarding training and safer recruitment
6. Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Guidance
7. Children who are vulnerable
8. Attendance arrangements and monitoring
9. Supporting emotional wellbeing
10. Peer on peer abuse
11. Online safety
12. Remote teaching and learning
13. Staff absence

1. Introduction

The School remains committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils and staff during COVID-19 restrictions and will, as far as is reasonably possible, take a whole institution approach to safeguarding during this period to ensure that safeguarding procedures continue to be operated effectively and the best interests of children continue to come first. Arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of staff are communicated to staff regularly including channels for raising any queries or concerns.

This addendum should be read in conjunction with the Oundle School and Laxton Junior School Safeguarding Policy and all other associated policies which remain in force during COVID-19. The School's Designated Safeguarding Leads are available via the usual channels and if anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act, and act immediately. The protection of children online is a particular priority while remote teaching and learning is taking place.

The safeguarding procedures herein will be monitored by the Designated Safeguarding Leads on an ongoing basis, with a review every two weeks to ensure that policy is kept up to date as circumstances continue to evolve.

2. Context

From 20th March 2020, the Government asked parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and schools to remain open, largely for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response who absolutely need to attend. A phased return commencing 1st June 2020 was announced in May, starting with LJS aged children in Reception, Year One and Year Six. Pupils, in all year groups, returned to school full-time from the beginning of the Michaelmas Term 2020, and the School put the arrangements in place to ensure a safe working environment in readiness for the pupils' return. A return to a national lockdown was announced in January 2021, and the School put in place arrangements for a return to online learning for all year groups along with in-school provision where necessary for children of critical workers and vulnerable children. This latter category included any pupils from overseas who were already in the UK at the time of the announcement. From 8th March 2021, the Government announced the reopening of schools for all pupils.

Guidance to schools is published here: [Actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak](#) .

3. Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)

Names and contact details for the Designated Safeguarding Leads and the Child Protection Officers at Oundle School are published in the School's Safeguarding Policy.

| | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|--|--------------|
| OS DSL: | Daviona Watt | dlw@oundleschool.org.uk | 07515 575526 |
| OS Deputy DSL: | Ben Raudnitz | br@oundleschool.org.uk | 07891 242344 |
| LJS DSL: | Stacey Crump | smc@laxtonjunior.org.uk | 07845 526372 |
| LJS Deputy DSL: | Fraser Harper | fh@laxtonjunior.org.uk | 07725 165064 |

The School will ensure that the DSLs and DDSLs have the time that they need to enable them to respond to any safeguarding and welfare concerns that may arise on pupils' return to School. This includes the handling of referrals to children's social care and other agencies where these are appropriate.

4. Reporting a Concern

Staff should continue to follow the communication channels defined in the Safeguarding Policy and report concerns about children and adults without delay in accordance with usual procedures. In summary:

Concerns about a child

- If a child is in immediate danger call the police and/or ambulance on 999
- Make a report, on the same day, via email, phone call or CPOMS (LJS) to the DSL or DDSL

Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership contact details are below. Remember that it is important to notify the DSL or DDSL if you contact the local authority.

Concerns about an adult

Do not inform the person about whom the concern has been raised

- Oundle School - report directly to Head of OS (or in her absence to DSL)
- Laxton Junior School - report directly to Head of LJS (or in his absence to DSL)
- Concerns about the Head of OS/LJS - report directly to Chairman of Governors

Staff may consider discussing any concerns with the DSL and may make any report via them.

5. Safeguarding Training and Safer Recruitment

The School's Safeguarding Training programme for all Designated Staff, Staff, Volunteers and Governors with regard to induction, annual updates and three yearly refresher training continues to be delivered and tracked. In addition to this, the DSLs will communicate any updates regarding school or local arrangements as they arise.

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. The School continues to operate safer recruitment policies in accordance with its Safeguarding Policy and the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020, following guidance with regard to any additional safeguards that may be needed owing to COVID-19.

6. Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) Guidance

This guidance is taken from [Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership website](#) (at the time of review last updated 23rd September 2020).

Current safeguarding arrangements during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the current Coronavirus COVID-19 outbreak, we would like to reassure you that we are doing our utmost to maintain business continuity and remain committed to safeguarding children and young people in the county.

- If it is an emergency and you think that a child may be in immediate danger please contact the emergency services directly by calling 999.*
- If you need to contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to make a safeguarding referral, please telephone 0300 126 1000.*
- If you need to contact Social Care urgently during the evening, at night or at the weekend, please telephone the out-of-hours team on 01604 626938.*

The NSCP website also provides links to

- temporary guidance on the application of thresholds whilst services are established during this critical period
- the most current guidance on Looked After Children (LAC), Mental Health Services, Health Visitor Healthy Child Programme and School Nursing.

7. Children who are Vulnerable

In line with the Government's [Actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak](#) guidance, the School will work together with external agencies as necessary to ensure that the welfare of vulnerable children is looked after and that they are protected as they make the transition back into school.

8. Attendance Arrangements and Monitoring

From the start of the Michaelmas Term 2020 school attendance returned to being mandatory and the usual rules on school attendance applied. Prior to the welcoming back of pupils, risk assessed arrangements were put in place to ensure safe working conditions in school in accordance with Government requirements. This process was overseen by the Leadership Team.

It was understood that pupils and parents may be anxious about returning to school, especially if they had been shielding previously but had been advised that this was no longer necessary, or were living in households where someone was clinically vulnerable, or were concerned about the comparatively increase risk from COVID-19, including those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds or had certain medical conditions. Parents and children were encouraged to share any concerns with the school so that these could be discussed and reassurance provided about the measures which are being put in place to

keep everyone in the community safe. Arrangements were in place to support the safety of pupils travelling from abroad, including plans for transfers from airports to and from school and self-isolation/quarantine where necessary. Where a pupil was unable to attend school because they were complying with clinical and/or public health advice, the School offered them access to remote education. Engagement with this activity would be monitored.

During the national lockdown announced in January 2021, a return to remote learning meant that in-school provision was limited to the children of critical workers and vulnerable children, including those overseas pupils who were in the UK at the time of the announcement. The School is continuing to record attendance in the register, following up on absences of pupils expected to be in school. The School has also put in place mechanisms for monitoring the attendance of remote learners.

9. Supporting Emotional and Physical Wellbeing

The School is committed to supporting pupils' wellbeing through ongoing development of the academic, pastoral and co-curricular programme to meet the challenges posed by COVID-19. The School's Learning for Life and PSHE programmes have never been more important. The Co-Curricular programme also has a particular part to play when it comes to providing variety of activity and time away from the screen: the potential for finding ways to engage pupils in sporting and creative pursuits via our online platform has become very clear.

With advice, support and training where necessary from our Mental Health Lead, the School continues to prioritise the needs of all children, being mindful of their emotional needs as they make the transition in and out of school and working together both within school and with external agencies, in order to promote and safeguard their welfare. The pastoral team will work with children and parents to provide tailored support for individuals who need it, with the involvement of the Health Centre team wherever necessary.

The School is committed to directing pupils, staff and parents to helpful resources to support positive mental health at all times, recognising that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and that distressing experiences and life events can prompt a variety of emotions and affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. When setting expectations for pupils' learning, whether in school or remotely, teachers will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health. The School's approach to the promotion of good behaviour and behaviour management takes into consideration the potential impact of the pandemic on children's mental health.

The School is alert to the potential for anxiety, stress or low mood in all children, particularly those who are vulnerable, and recognises that it is important to contextualise these feelings as normal responses to an abnormal situation. The School recognises that different children will react in different ways to the current situation and that remote learning will for most pupils limit their interaction with their peers and the staff who look after them in school, which may have an impact on their wellbeing. During COVID-19 restrictions and beyond, staff will continue to offer support to children emotionally via the pastoral system and, where possible, the remote provision that will be offered by the Emotional Wellbeing Team. The School advocates a Team around the Child approach when concerns arise, and the aim will be to work with pupils and parents to identify issues and develop strategies for support, using our established referral pathways and working together with external agencies if necessary.

For children who are identified as a cause for concern, the School will continue to operate support structures in accordance with our normal procedures, working with the children themselves, their parents and external agencies as necessary. This will require agreement of appropriate mechanisms for monitoring and review of progress and, if appropriate, arrangements for information sharing between medical professionals to enable the School to provide the best possible care and support for the individual.

If the School is concerned at any time that the best interests of the individual are not being met and that Early Help or a referral to Social Services might be needed, it will consult Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership's Thresholds Guidance and act accordingly.

10. Peer on Peer Abuse

Any disclosures of peer on peer abuse are dealt with and recorded in accordance with the School's Safeguarding Policy, having regard to the guidance in Part 5 of KCSIE 2020 and the School's Behaviour Policies and Countering Bullying and Cyberbullying Policies.

The School recognises that during any COVID-19 restrictions, an adapted process will be required for managing any report of such abuse and providing appropriately tailored support for victim(s) and perpetrator(s). The School will listen and work with the pupils involved, and parents/carers and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety of all pupils.

11. Online Safety

The School's approach to online safety is co-ordinated by the Online Safety Groups at Oundle School and Laxton Junior School. Online safety is included in the curriculum at all levels and information is provided to parents/carers as appropriate. The School's online safety policy is set out in its Technology Policies and Acceptable Use Policies for Staff and Pupils which are to be read in conjunction with the Code of Conduct.

The School is committed to providing a safe environment for the pupils online during any COVID-19 restrictions and at any time where remote learning is in place. It is essential that all interaction between staff and pupils is conducted within the school system to ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring can take place. All staff and pupils are expected to be aware of the School's online safety policies and what to do if they have concerns/where to go for further help.

Normal channels for the raising of any safeguarding concerns continue to apply during COVID-19, with mechanisms in place to identify, intervene in, and escalate any incident where appropriate. Given the current situation, the importance of using neutral notification reporting routes is emphasised to the pupils if they encounter any concerns online, with signposts both internally and to age appropriate sites externally as follows:

Internet matters – information for parents – <https://internetmatters.org>

Childline - for support - <https://www.childline.org.uk/get-support/>

UK Safer Internet Centre - to report or remove harmful content - <https://reportharmfulcontent.com/>

CEOP – advice on making a report about online abuse - <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre>

12. Remote Teaching and Learning

Online teaching and learning where utilised should follow the same principles set out in the School's Staff and Pupil Codes of Conduct, alongside the appropriate Teaching and Learning policies. It is imperative that all staff who interact with children continue to model appropriate behaviour and look out for signs a child may be at risk, reporting any concerns through the usual channels so that they can be dealt with in accordance with the School's Safeguarding Policy.

The School has provided guidance for staff and pupils to support them in the remote learning environment. The Safeguarding Team are available to answer queries as they arise. Parents have been informed of these arrangements and asked to reinforce with their children the messages which they have learned about keeping themselves safe online, the need for good judgement over what they post, and the importance of

raising any concerns promptly with a trusted adult so that these can be addressed. They have also been provided with some useful resources to support them in supporting their children to keep themselves safe at home. This guidance will be updated and reissued to parents, pupils and staff as appropriate.

The School will ensure the use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection, including GDPR, requirements.

13. Staff Absence

Where the School has concerns about the impact of staff absence, such as DSL or first aiders, this will be discussed by the Leadership Team and, where appropriate, with the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership, in order to confirm an appropriate solution.

Updated February 2021