

# **COVID-19 CLOSURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION**

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## **Temporary Policy Addendum:**

This Policy addendum is effective from 4 January 2021

## **1. Context**

To support public health efforts during the return to education in January, secondary schools and FE providers will invoke a phased return to face-to-face provision at the start of term.

From 4 January 2021 Secondary age parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response - who absolutely need to attend.

Further education guidance for restricting attendance during the national lockdown was issued to providers in January. The guidance requires us to provide care for a limited number of children and young people - those who are vulnerable, and children/young people whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

This addendum of the Hull Training and Adult Education (HTAE) Child Protection/Prevent Policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements during national lockdown.

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## **Key contacts**

Remain as per the HTAE Child Protection/Prevent Policy.

## 2. 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;
- 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 deputies) 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.

HTAE 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: Vanessa Drax, who will be informed by leads/tutors/managers.

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 Donna Ackroyd (SENDSCO) will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, Vanessa Drax (DSL) or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Tutors and all staff will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend training, including remotely if needed.

### **3. Critical workers**

Parents whose work is critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and EU transition response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors. Please refer to government guidance for more details of categories.

### **4. Attendance monitoring**

In mainstream schools/FE providers, all secondary-age pupils who are not expected to be in centre during the national lockdown. Tutors should mark ProSolution as appropriate:

- O - online
- I – isolating (but working)

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

Shielding advice is currently in place in tier 4 areas, and so all children still deemed clinically extremely vulnerable are advised not to attend school.

HTAE staff and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending HTAE – HTAE will then follow up on any learner that they were expecting to attend, who does not.

HTAE staff will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend.

Phone calls will be made to the parents/carers in these circumstances.

To support the above, HTAE 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/FE, or discontinues, HTAE tutors/leads will notify their social worker. Leads will also inform Donna Ackroyd the SENDCO to enable her to liaise with the data team

## **5. Designated Safeguarding Lead**

HTAE has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSLs.

**The Designated Safeguarding Lead is:** Vanessa Drax

**The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead are:** Sian Ward, Keran James, Amanda Skinner, Debbie Johnson, Bev Johns, Natalie Gibson, Donna Ackroyd

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/ProMonitor and liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and 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 or college.

HTAE staff and volunteers will have access to a trained DSL (or deputy).

The DSL/SENDCO/leads, key worker staff will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

## **6. Reporting a concern**

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the services Child Protection/Prevent Policy, this includes making a report via CPOMS/ProMonitor, which can be done remotely. This must be logged by 4pm on the day the concern is raised.

If a concern is raised out of hours, the staff member should report the concern on CPOMS and alert the DSL 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 services Child Protection/Prevent Policy.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS/ProMonitor from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Head of Service (Sharon Gamble) 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 at HTAE, they should follow the procedures outlined in the HTAE Child protection/Prevent Policy.

If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Head of Service away from HTAE, this should be done verbally over the phone and followed up with an email to the HOS.

Concerns around the Head of Service should be directed to the Assistant Director, Tracy Harsley.

## **7. Safeguarding Training and Induction**

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020). 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 HTAE they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our service, we will consider 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 movement within the service, HTAE should seek assurance from the Human Resources that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training.

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of the receiving setting's child protection policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

## **8. 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, HTAE 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).

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 HTAE 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.

HTAE 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.

HTAE 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.

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/volunteers will be in the school or college, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity.

As such, HTAE will continue to keep the Single Central Record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

## **Volunteers**

HTAE may use volunteers to assist in handing out and securing COVID-19 test kits to learners and staff members. Other duties may be required such as building test kits, cleaning down areas and directing people.

Under no circumstances will a volunteer in respect of whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity. The manager of the testing process will hold an enhanced DBS with Barred List check..

Existing volunteers in regulated activity do not have to be re-checked if they have already had a DBS check (which includes barred list information).

Supervision must be:

- by a person who is in regulated activity.
- regular and day to day; and
- reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children.

In appointing volunteers, the service will follow safer recruitment processes.

## **9. Online safety in schools and FE Providers**

HTAE will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system.

Where learners are using computers at HTAE, appropriate supervision will be in place.

## **10. Children and online safety away from school/college/training**

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 HTAE Child Protection/Prevent Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

Tutors delivering online teaching should follow government advice as set out in the 'Get Help with Remote Education'.

HTAE 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 if there are virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- No 1:1s, groups only; 1:1s may be possible, subject to a risk assessment and SLT permissions,
- 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 specified by senior managers and approved by our IT network manager / provider to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

## **11. Supporting children not in centre**

HTAE is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people.

Where the DSL/tutor/lead/manager/SENDSCO has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in learning, 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/ProSolution, as should a record of contact have made.

The communication plans can include remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

HTAE and its DSL/leads/managers will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan.

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

HTAE will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

HTAE recognises that the learning environment is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of learners and their parents/carers.

Tutors at HTAE need to be aware of this in setting expectations of learners' work where they are at home.

## **12. Supporting Learners at HTAE**

HTAE is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its learners.

HTAE will continue to be a safe space for all learners to attend and flourish. The Head of Service will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to learner ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

HTAE 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.

HTAE 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/ProMonitor.

Where HTAE has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders/fire wardens – we will discuss them immediately with the Head of Service.

### **13. Peer on Peer Abuse**

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

Where a Training provider/School/College receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within of the Child Protection Policy.

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

Concerns and actions must be recorded on CPOMS/ProMonitor and appropriate referrals made.

The DSL will receive support from the Head of Service/ managers and HTAE Governors.

### **14. Links to other policies and documents**

- Attendance Policy
- Child protection/Prevent Policy
- DBS Protocol
- ESafety Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020)
- Safeguarding Adults Policy
- Safeguarding and Prevent Training Protocol
- Further education guidance for restricting attendance during the national lockdown

