

Key changes in DfE safeguarding guidance – 20/5/20

- It will be especially important that wider opening risk assessments (as set out in [action for education and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1 June](#)) and related Health and Safety risk assessments are appropriately linked into a school or college's approach to safeguarding and child protection policy.
- the importance of ensuring relevant safeguarding and welfare information held on all children (including returning children) remains accurate. Schools and colleges (led by the DSL or deputy) should be doing all they reasonably can to ask parents and carers to advise them of any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing that they should be aware of before a child returns
- DSLs (or deputies) should be leading the school or college's input into the local arrangements
- There should be a trained DSL or DDSL on site at all times; in exceptional circumstances, it is okay for the DSL / DDSL to be contactable by phone, etc but in that situation, there must be a nominated senior person on site to take operational responsibility
- The DSL (or deputy) should provide support to teachers and pastoral staff to ensure that contact is maintained with children (and their families) who are not yet returning to school or college. Where possible staff should try and speak directly to children to help identify any concerns. Staff should be encouraged (where possible) to make calls from the school or college site via school or college phones and devices. Where staff use personal phones to make calls, they should withhold their personal number.
- Vulnerable children who have a social worker (e.g. s47 CP plan, s17, CiN, early help plan) are now expected to attend school unless they are shielding – discuss with the allocated SW if you are unsure
- Transition – if any child moving from one school to another is vulnerable, their EHCP / CP plan / PEP should be forwarded to the new school ideally before the child transfers so the new school can start planning (for children joining you, you might need to quote this to the previous school) – this should be done DSL to DSL or SENCo to SENCo, etc.
- Schools must continue to update their SCR to include all staff on site on any given day; during COVID, this may include volunteers and staff borrowed from another setting.

Actions needed

- Ensure SLT & governors / trustees understand that the DSL / DDSLs must have additional capacity to deal with emerging issues / concerns – this may mean reducing your teaching commitments, for example
- Find a manageable way to ask all parents of returning children whether there have been any changes in circumstances, bereavement, etc that may affect their child
- Check with parents / carers that you have the most up to date emergency contact numbers
- If not already doing so, work out how you are going to have direct contact with all children not physically attending
- Think about whether any staff need additional training on things like changes to risk assessments, personal care, safe use of PPE
- Decide how you are going to maintain lists of which staff / volunteers were on site on any given day – doing this on the SCR may be too cumbersome so a simple log / signing in sheet might be better

- Ensure you have written risk assessments for any new volunteers or staff on loan from other settings / organisations
- Keep your safeguarding governor / trustee in the loop!

Information to be included in the CP policy addendum (a model addendum has already been circulated to NASS members)

- That staff may identify new concerns about children (as they return) who have not been a concern in the past
- That concerns / allegations about colleagues must still be reported, and how this should be done (e.g. if HT / Principal / Registered manager is working from home / not available)
- That referrals to TRA or DBS are statutory and will still be made in line with the temporary arrangements published on their websites
- How to contact a designated person on any given day
- That the DSL and DDSLs may need additional protected time to deal with the anticipated increase in safeguarding concerns as children return to school
- Any change needed to the section on managing reports of peer:peer abuse and supporting victims
- What support is available in school or from partner agencies to respond to mental health issues
- what arrangements are in place to keep children not physically attending the school or college safe, especially online, and how concerns about these children should be progressed – for example, a police welfare check if you cannot contact a child or family
- any updated advice received from the local safeguarding partners
- any updated advice received from local authorities regarding children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need