Appendix to Safeguarding Policy Covering Arrangements and Expectations Relating to the Lockdown and Covid-19 Pandemic

Reporting concerns during the lockdown

Throughout the lockdown, it remains essential that any concerns are passed immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Leads. This is the case whether the concern relates to interactions with children onsite or remotely. The method of reporting of concerns must be verbal in the first instance to ensure speed of response, either in person or on the telephone – all staff need to ensure that they have the mobile phone number of the DSL and at least one other DDSL as well as the school office phone number in order that concerns can be passed on from home by staff working remotely. This verbal report will then be followed up immediately with the referrer recording on CPOMS, before the DSL records subsequent actions taken.

In the very unlikely event that a DSL or DDSL cannot be reached or in the case of an emergency where there are immediate concerns for the safety of children, the following numbers can be used as well as, or in combination with, a 999 call to the police:

Waltham Forest MASH: 020 8496 2310

Waltham Forest LADO: 020 8496 3646 / 07770 052 421 / 07791 559 789

Vulnerable pupils attending key worker/vulnerable pupil school

During the lockdown, children who have a social worker will be asked to attend the Key Worker and Vulnerable Pupil School. Children and young people assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children who have a child in need (CiN) plan, a child protection (CP) plan or who are a looked-after child (LAC) will be expected to attend.

These children and young people are encouraged to attend provision, unless their social worker decides that they are at less risk at home or in their placement, for example, due to underlying health conditions.

The Safeguarding Team will follow up with the parent or carer – and social worker/local authority, where appropriate – to explore reasons for absence where vulnerable children are not attending.

Where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school or discontinues, the DSL/DDSLs will notify the social worker immediately. The Safeguarding Team will keep in regular contact with the family.

The school knows its children best and will identify vulnerable children who do not necessarily fall within the criteria described above. The offer of a school place should be extended to additional vulnerable pupils prioritised by the level of need.

Risk assessments are carried out for vulnerable children where necessary, particularly where they are not attending school regularly.

Children who do not fall within these groups will remain at home with appropriate care and the schools will provide teaching materials and support to parents remotely.

Keeping in contact with vulnerable children during the pandemic

A tiered approach will be employed with the greater degree of contact for the most vulnerable on a sliding scale.

All vulnerable pupils will have contact from the Safeguarding team at least once per week.

Learning will continue at home through work provided.

a) **Children with a child protection plan (if not attending school)**

Where the CP child is not attending school there should be a visit made to the family home with doorstep contact where this is possible, particularly where the social worker has not informed us that a home visit has not been undertaken in that particular week.

Visits should be coordinated with the allocated social worker to avoid duplication.

Phone contact should be made at least once per week with parents/carers, although this frequency should be informed by the level of risk.

The school will liaise with all necessary professionals as usual.

The DSL/DDSLs will attend any meetings, unless advised otherwise - the attendance will generally be remote via telephone or video calls.

All home visits and telephone communication will be recorded on CPOMS with updates provided to children's social care to aid multi-agency working.

b) **Vulnerable Families – those children who are subject to Child in Need Plans, Early Help, SEND escalating concerns and/or those who school staff are concerned for (if not attending school)**

DSL to liaise with allocated social workers to share information relating to their contact with the family, including any home visits.

Phone contact once a week with pupil and parents/carers.

Use of CPOMS to record contact.

The most vulnerable non-CP children not attending school will potentially need home visits from a member of the safeguarding team, so that they can be seen in person. The frequency of any visit should be related to risk. For any children with a social worker, other professionals should be kept informed. This is especially important, since for many children, school is a protective factor and when it is missing, the risk may increase and children's services may need to reassess the case.

Staff should attend CIN /Early Help meetings wherever practical or possible – this will mostly be through telephone or video calls.

Where pupils that are considered as vulnerable or subject to child protection plans have not attended school, where they usually have been doing so, the WF children's social care team should be informed ASAP.

Guidance for home visits during pandemic:

1. Conduct home visits in pairs.

2. Check pupil attendance before leaving on visits – no requirement to visit or call

those pupils who attend school.

3. When driving, distance yourself as much as possible – one in front, one in back.

4. Ring / knock on property to ascertain whether the pupil is at home and safe.

5. Take two steps back from the door and do not approach. Speak from a distance if

the door is answered.

6. Ask to speak to the pupil themselves.

7. If parents say the pupil is not available, ask when they might be. Remind of isolation requirements.

8. Ask for a contact number where the pupil can be reached and record this – call the pupil in the presence of the parent / carer ideally and ask questions.

9. Always ask the following questions to the pupil to ascertain safety:

☐ Are they well?

☐ Is there anything that the school needs to know?

☐ Are they able to access the work set online?

☐ Can we offer any other help or support with anything?

10. Record their answers informally and explain that you will continue to be in touch, either by phone or in person.

11. Ensure they are safe and well.

12. If there is no answer from the home, record and raise concerns upon returning to school. Leave a calling card requesting verbal contact with school.

13. Inform social care of the outcome of the visit if there is already a social worker involved with the family.

14. If there are new concerns about the pupil follow the usual procedures, including calling social care and if immediate threats are present call 999 for assistance.

14. Record all responses/observations upon return to school onto CPOMS.

Contact details /personal information of vulnerable pupils

The school will double-check that all contact details are up to date, particularly for vulnerable children and families.

Contact details for vulnerable pupils will be shared through a private, password protected channel, for example through access to the secure Scholarpack software or through password-protected school email.

No personal information for pupils will be taken from the premises (paper copies of CP records or contact details etc). Instead, this will be managed electronically, e.g. through CPOMS.

The school will ensure that emergency lists of contact details are GDPR-complaint and that data protection isn't compromised.

Promoting mental health during the pandemic

Pastoral care will be extended remotely in a number of ways so as to reduce stress and anxiety for families:

- All pupils and parents encouraged to create structure at home so that it includes a balance of education (including through the school's extensive online offer), relaxation and exercise
- Three-weekly calls home from teachers to all pupils, with weekly calls to more vulnerable pupils where they are not attending school
- Weekly postcards sent home, and weekly messages posted from class teachers to pupils on Google Classroom
- Assemblies on a range of values and pastoral themes posted online 3 times a week
- Ongoing liaison with social workers supporting families in need
- Signposting in school literature to sources of support for mental health
- Availability of senior members of staff throughout pandemic to advise on home learning and routines

Home:school communication during the pandemic

Most children are being educated at home during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, so school leaders and teachers are having to adjust to remote education strategies. While this is happening, it is important that school continues to follow safeguarding procedures.

As set out in the Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers guidance, online education should follow the same principles set out in the school's staff code of conduct. Keeping teachers safe when providing remote education is essential.

Parents and carers will have access to the conduct expectations regarding staff via the policy page on the school's website.

Communication with parents, carers and pupils should take place within typical school hours.

Remote communication should be conducted through official channels that have been approved by SLT.

Calls should be made using school phones, rather than personal devices, though where it is necessary to use a personal phone, for example for a member of staff working from home, the 141 code should be used so that the number comes up as withheld on the recipient's phone.

School email should be used rather than personal email. Email from parents will be responded to via the office as a go-between.

Written teacher and parent/pupil communication will be conducted through official school channels like Google Classroom.

Teachers should not share personal information so as to maintain boundaries.

Personal information will not be shared with pupils and parents in communications.

Virtual lessons and live streaming

There is no expectation that teachers should live stream lessons, or provide pre-recorded videos (including where their face is shown). The school will consider the approaches that best suit the needs of our pupils and staff. All parties should be comfortable with engaging with this method of home learning.

Teaching from home is different to teaching in the classroom. Teachers should try to find a quiet or private room or area to talk to pupils, parents or carers. When broadcasting a lesson or making a recording, consider what will be in the background.

Where live lessons/discussions take place, this must always be to groups and not 1:1.

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 where possible be against a neutral background.

The live class should be recorded and backed up elsewhere, 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.

The school will risk assess the use of live learning using webcams.

The school will consult with data controllers to ensure that any teaching/learning software and/or platforms are suitable and raise no privacy issues.

Personal data and GDPR protocols should be followed – contact details should not be shared with any pupils or parents for *other* pupils or parents; strong passwords should be used and logins not shared.

Pupil Online Safety

School contact with parents and carers during this time will also be used to reinforce the importance of children staying safe online.

It's especially important for parents and carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do.

The school will emphasise the importance of a safe online environment and encourage parents and carers to set age-appropriate parental controls on digital devices and use internet filters to block malicious websites; these are usually free, but often need to be turned on.

The school will draw upon the following online safety sources of information and where appropriate publicise and signpost parents and carers to them

- Advice from NSPCC on undertaking remote education safely
- Guidance from the UK Safer Internet Centre on remote education
- Guidance on teaching online safety in schools provides information to help schools ensure their pupils understand how to stay safe and behave online.

Financial difficulties & access to food during the pandemic

For some families, the coronavirus pandemic may lead to unemployment or redundancy and the school should be alert to the potential stress and loss of income this will generate. For these parents, it will be important to understand where to signpost them to get support, including from third-sector organisations. Food bank information will be shared with parents in school literature.

Following interactions with families during the pandemic, staff should be especially careful to refer on instances of a lack of access to food, in order that targeted support can be provided by the school or through a 3rd party.

Children on Free School Meals will be given access to vouchers.

County Lines

Throughout the pandemic, children at risk of criminal exploitation, including through 'county lines' operations, will be particularly at risk, not least because drug dealers will need to continue to supply people with addictions. During the pandemic, the government are indicating that the police will only deal with life-threatening situations so staff need to be particularly vigilant for any indication of exploitation.