

Annex 1



COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Edmund Waller

Edmund Waller

Policy owner: Ruth Stevens and Sue Greenbank

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Date shared with staff:

1. Context

From 20th March 2020 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**.

Schools and all childcare providers were asked to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and **cannot be safely cared for at home**.

This addendum of the Edmund Waller Safeguarding, and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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Key contacts

Role	Name	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Ruth Stevens	r.stevens@edmundwaller.lewisham.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Sue Greenbank	s.greenbank@edmundwaller.lewisham.sch.uk
Headteacher	Colleen Boxall	headteacher@edmundwaller.lewisham.sch.uk
Chair of Governors	Kate Franklin	k.franklin@edmundwaller.lewisham.sch.uk
Safeguarding Governor	Gail Exon	G.Exon@edmundwaller.lewisham.sch.uk

2. Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people with education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child Protection Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the Local Authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy Safeguarding Lead) 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.

Edmund Waller 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: Ruth Stevens.

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 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 Edmund Waller will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

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

Edmund Waller will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

3. Attendance monitoring

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance.

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

4. How this will look at Edmund Waller

From 20 March 2020, Edmund Waller will close for all but the most [vulnerable children](#) and for children of [critical key workers](#).

Vulnerable children in this context include children who have a social worker and those children and young people with education, health and care (EHC) plans. Those who have a social worker include children who have a child protection plan and those who are looked after by the local authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Critical key workers are defined as parents whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response, including those who work in health and social care and in other critical sectors. However, many parents working in these critical sectors will be able to ensure their child is kept at home. Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.

It was announced on 23 March that the UK would enter a stricter period of social distancing, with people only allowed to leave home for very limited purposes. The UK-wide measures are intended to delay the spread of the virus – if the majority of the country are strictly self-isolating, this allows for some people to gather where

that is necessary, whether it be in hospitals, food production facilities, or in schools or childcare settings.

5. How to implement social distancing

To help ensure that the risk of virus spread for both staff and children is as low as possible, staff and Senior Leaders at Edmund Waller should:

- tell children, parents, carers or any visitors, such as suppliers, not to visit the education or childcare setting if they are displaying any symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)
- consider how children arrive at the education or childcare setting and reduce any unnecessary travel on coaches, buses or public transport
- ensure class sizes reflect the numbers of teaching staff available and are kept as small as possible
- stagger lunch times, break times and the movement of pupils around the school to reduce large groups of children gathering
- discourage parents from gathering at school gates

We are asking you to:

- make sure anyone who is feeling ill stays at home (this means self-isolating as a school or college 'household' if a resident is ill). See the [guidance on isolation for residential educational settings](#)
- ensure all staff and children wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds frequently, and are encouraged not to touch their face, while using a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and using bins for tissue waste. If children or young people have trouble washing their hands, ensure help is available
- inform parents and communities about the measures that you are taking and get their help to implement them
- increase cleaning of surfaces in classrooms, including desks and handles, and within toilet blocks and changing rooms, adhering to [guidance on cleaning of non-healthcare settings](#)
- for children and young people with an EHC plan, work with the local authority as well as with parents to decide how best to continue supporting these children and young people to stay healthy.

6. What parents can do

- Talk to their children about coronavirus (COVID-19), social distancing and hand washing.
- Follow [guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection](#).
- Do not gather at entrances or in playgrounds, and model social distancing so that their children learn good practice.

To support the above, Edmund Waller 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, Edmund Waller will notify their social worker.

7. Designated Safeguarding Lead

Edmund Waller School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Ruth Stevens

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Sue Greenbank

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 - 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 completing a pink form 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.

It is important that all Edmund Waller staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to speak to them.

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

8. 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 completing a pink form.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access a pink form from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher and 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 concern 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: Kate Franklin

9. Safeguarding Training and induction

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID-19 virus.

For the period COVID-19 measures are in place, a DSL (or deputy) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputy).

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). The DSL should communicate with staff regarding 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 Edmund Waller, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

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

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.

10. 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, Edmund Waller 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 (2019) (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.

Where Edmund Waller 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.

Edmund Waller 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.

Edmund Waller 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 current National emergency, 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, Edmund Waller will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

11. Online safety in school

Edmund Waller 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.

12. 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 should follow the same principles as set out in the Edmund Waller Teaching and Learning Policy and Code of Conduct.

Edmund Waller 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 when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- No 1:1s, groups only.
- 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 should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

13. Supporting children not in school

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

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.

If a child is on a Social Care Plan then details of this plan must be recorded, as should a record of contact be made.

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

Edmund Waller and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan.

This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website.

Edmund Waller 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 Edmund Waller need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Edmund Waller 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.

14. Supporting children in school

Edmund Waller is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

Edmund Waller 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.

Edmund Waller 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 COVID-19.

Edmund Waller 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.

Where Edmund Waller has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – will discuss them immediately with the headteacher.

15. Peer on Peer Abuse

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

Where a school 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 a pink form and appropriate referrals made.