



St Mary's CE Primary School

Felsham Road

Putney

**Arrangements for Child
Protection and Safeguarding
During COVID-19 School
Closures**

Vision: Delivering excellence, allowing all to flourish

Mission: Creating a culture of wonder, guided by Christian faith

Values: Endurance, Compassion, Thankfulness

Updated January 2021

**This document forms an extraordinary amendment to the policy already in place and is operational for as long as required.
This document may be subject to updates if situation changes.**

Introduction

This addendum applies from the start of the Spring Term 2021.

It sets out changes to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in light of coronavirus and the national lockdown currently in place, and should be read in conjunction with that policy.

This addendum is subject to change, in response to any new or updated guidance the government or our local safeguarding partners may publish. We will keep it under review.

From Monday January 4th 2021 schools have been required to close to the majority of pupils and to remain open only for the children of identified critical workers and some groups of pupils identified as particularly vulnerable.

The way in which the school is currently operating in response to COVID-19 is fundamentally different to how we would normally operate, however, a number of important safeguarding principles remain the same:

We will follow the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

We will always have regard for these important safeguarding principles:

- The best interests of children must come first
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should act on it immediately
- A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy should be available at all times
- It's essential that unsuitable people don't enter the school workforce or gain access to children
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online

If the situation arises where the school either hosts as a cluster school, or where pupils from the school are educated at another local school as a result of local cluster arrangements all schools involved will uphold the principles in [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) and this policy

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)

Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Name: Kerry Dunford – Inclusion Manager

Email: kdunford.212@lgflmail.org

Contact number: 07731-014641

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Name: Amanda Bishop – Deputy Head Teacher

Email: amanda.bishop@st-marys-putney.wandsworth.sch.uk

Contact number: 07725-547007

We will keep all school staff and volunteers informed by email (Staff Update) and a daily updated a-frame poster displayed on entry to school as to who will be the DSL (or deputy) on any given day, and how to contact them.

We will endeavour to have a trained DSL available to staff at all times, wherever possible this person will be onsite, where this is not possible they will be available to be contacted via mobile or online video link. Staff have been provided with contact details for all key members of staff.

In extraordinary circumstances, where a DSL is not available: **Susan Abraham – School Business Manager** will take responsibility for the co-ordinating of safeguarding onsite. She will be responsible for liaising with the off-site DSL (or deputy) to make sure she can:

- Identify the most vulnerable children in school
- Update and manage access to child protection files, where necessary
- Liaise with children's social workers where they need access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments
- Ensuring site safeguarding checks are carried out and recorded
- Advice can also be sought from Ameliah Rayn, Wandsworth Safeguarding in Education Lead, MASH or other key officers (for full details see **Appendix 1**)

Reporting concerns

All staff and volunteers must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this, both for children at school and those at home.

If any member of staff or volunteer becomes aware of a safeguarding concern about a pupil or family, they will record it in the usual way according to school procedures and pass it on to the DSL so that appropriate decisions and actions can be taken.

If there is a safeguarding concern or allegation about a member of staff or volunteer, the Head Teacher or DSL will be informed immediately so that the matter can be investigated. The LADO will be consulted, or a referral made to LADO, as per usual guidance. The LADO service is contactable via telephone and email as usual. The whistleblowing policy remains in place and can be followed by any staff member or volunteer if required. The Whistleblowing Policy can be found on the school's public drive or for those who do not have access to this on the school's website (About Us – School Policies).

As a reminder, all staff should continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

Appendix 2 provides information about Wandsworth Borough Council Services and access during the current situation.

Working with other agencies

We will continue to work with children's social care, with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children, and with any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners, to help keep children safe. We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance.

Monitoring attendance

We will continue to take our attendance register. We will follow guidance from the Department for Education on how to record attendance (including for pupils learning remotely) and what data to submit.

During the national lockdown, only vulnerable children and children of critical workers will attend school in person.

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.

The school also has flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support or where there are other significant concerns about their wellbeing.

The DSL and DDSL are aware of the most vulnerable children and have ensured that those pupils who meet the criteria have been offered places during this period. The school has requested and recorded the most up to date contact details for all pupils to enable the most effective contact with pupils and families during this difficult time.

The school continues to work with and support children's social care to help protect vulnerable children. We expect those pupils identified as vulnerable children to attend school, provided they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. In circumstances where the parent does not want to allow their child to attend school we are working with the family and the allocated social worker to encourage attendance. If required risk assessments have been carried out to ensure any risks have been fully considered and the most appropriate plan put in place.

Where any child we expect to attend school doesn't attend, or stops attending, our Inclusion Manager (Kerry Dunford) will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers
- Notify the allocated social worker if any vulnerable child expected in school fails to attend.

The school has carried out risk assessments for each pupil with an EHCP (in consultation with Health, LA and parents) who cannot have their needs met at home; to decide whether they should be offered a school place during the COVID-19 crisis. These assessments will be revisited if individual circumstances change, or if Government guidance is updated.

While children are educated onsite the school has put appropriate safety and hygiene regulations in place in accordance with government guidance.

The school has set up systems to ensure all vulnerable children and their families not in attendance are contacted on a regular basis, to monitor their wellbeing and provide an opportunity for any concerns the child or family have to be shared. The school has ensured that those staff members responsible for making contact with families have been provided with advice about how to conduct their contact with families and given key information about families and professional networks to facilitate any necessary contact.

Guidance from the local authority has been provided to schools about keeping in touch with vulnerable pupils (Appendix 3).

Eligibility for free school meals (FSM) is not a determining factor in assessing vulnerability in terms of COVID-19 criteria. However, the school recognises that families whose children qualify for FSM may be experiencing particular challenges during this crisis, and have made arrangements to ensure that FSM children either have access to a meal or are provided with food vouchers.

Peer-on-peer abuse

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education when managing reports and supporting victims of peer-on-peer abuse. Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – about both children attending school and those at home.

Domestic abuse

Wandsworth's Project Tearose (sharing of police notifications relating to attendance at domestic incidents with DSL in schools) continues to operate during the COVID-19 pandemic. Notifications are shared verbally with DSL by the Safeguarding In Education Advisor (SEA) – this provides the opportunity to agree any actions required in each individual circumstance.

Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher or volunteer

We will continue to follow the principles set out in Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – whether those concerns are about staff/supply teachers/volunteers working on site or remotely.

We will continue to refer adults who have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

We will continue to refer potential cases of teacher misconduct to the Teaching Regulation Agency. We will do this using the email address

Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

Safeguarding all pupils

The school remains committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of **all** pupils and recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people. The current circumstances create some unusual challenges in ensuring children have access to safe adults outside their immediate family in whom they can confide any worries or fears. We also recognise that many families are under immense pressure in the current situation, both emotionally and financially, which will mean that not

every home is a place of safety for children and young people. Some may be confined to small living spaces or may be witnessing or subjected to abusive situations.

The school has ensured that all families have been provided with information about how to contact staff members during the school closures and that contact details for key support services and helplines, along with a copy of this document, have been included in information sent out/provided on the school website:

www.stmarysschoolputney.co.uk

Staff are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children at greater risk. Staff will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on pupils' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns. They will act on concerns immediately in line with the procedures set out above

The school will maintain contact with children/parents who are at home via live lessons/phone calls (if needed) and class emails.

Staff will look out for signs like:

- Not completing assigned work or logging on to school systems
- No contact from children or families
- Seeming more withdrawn during any class check-ins or video calls

Online safety and providing off site teaching

Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately, following our reporting procedures

We will make sure children know how to report any concerns they have back to our school, and signpost them to other sources of support too.

Our remote education provision should follow usual principles for safe and acceptable use of technology. This includes, but is not limited to:

- The school's Remote Education Policy incorporating Microsoft Teams User Agreement and Code of Conduct (Updated January 2021)
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Staff pupil/student online relationships as outlined in the Staff Handbook
- The school's e-Safety and Social Media Policies

The school has communicated information to parents where online learning platforms are being used which has included:

- Confirmation of online tools and or sites that the school will be using/if using
- Confirmation of what the child may be asked to do online
- Confirmation as to who their child will be interacting with online
- Confirmation as to whether other pupils will be able to access their child via the online platform
- Allowing the parent or carer the opportunity to voice any concerns
- The importance of not leaving the child alone during screen time
- Monitoring the search history
- Maintaining open communication with the child about online safety
- How to report a concern

Parents and carers have also been provided with details/links to support services e.g. Internet Matters, LGFL, Net-aware, ThinkUKnow, Safer Internet Centre etc.

The school recognises that not all children will have access to a computer or internet facilities in the home, and has ensured that age appropriate resources have been provided for any child who needs them.

Microsoft Teams User Agreement and Code of Conduct

All stakeholders were sent a copy of this agreement at the start of lockdown (January 4th 2021) and have been asked to agree to abide by the points in the relevant Code of Conduct by signing and returning.

Mental health

If any pupil, parent or carer has concerns about mental health and wellbeing, they should contact our Inclusion Manager (DDSL) Kerry Dunford.

The school will make sure pupils, parents and carers are aware of this.

Children in school

Staff will be aware of the possible effects that this period may have on pupils' mental health. They will look out for behavioural signs, including pupils being fearful, withdrawn, aggressive, oppositional or excessively clingy, to help identify where support may be needed. Any concerns should be reported to our Inclusion Manager (DDSL) Kerry Dunford.

Children at home

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils

We will also signpost all pupils, parents/carers and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time.

When setting expectations for pupils learning remotely and not attending school, teachers will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health.

Staff and volunteers will be alert to mental health concerns in children who are at home, and act on these immediately, following our reporting procedures.

Safer recruitment/movement of staff and staff training

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that staff and volunteers who work in our school are safe to work with children.

We will continue to follow our safer recruitment procedures, and Part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

When carrying out DBS checks and right to work checks, we will follow the latest guidance from the DBS, Home Office and Immigration Enforcement as appropriate (for example, with regards to the process for verifying documents). We will inform candidates about the intended process as soon as reasonably practicable.

We will continue to do our usual checks on new volunteers, and do risk assessments to decide whether volunteers who aren't in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with paragraphs 183-188 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Any new staff or volunteers will be checked in line with relevant processes and details recorded on the Single Central Record in the usual way. They will be provided with a safeguarding induction to ensure they are clear about expected processes

All existing staff have had safeguarding training and have read Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE). DSLs will ensure all staff are informed of any updates or variations due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

DSL training is unlikely to take place at present. The Government have advised that any DSL (or deputy) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL even if they miss their refresher training, however all of our DSL's possess up to date training.

If any staff member requires initial DSL training during this period, as they need to take on DSL responsibilities they have not previously had, the school will take advice from the Safeguarding in Education Advisor and an appropriate level of input will be provided.

Support services information

All support services have adapted their working protocols to provide best possible input for children, young people and families during the COVID-19 pandemic. The school will ensure they access any guidance and updates in relation to national and local services and circulate as appropriate to staff members.

Some useful links are:

ChildLine:

0800 1111 who are operating a 9am–Midnight service in response to COVID-19.

UK Safer Internet Centre:

<https://reportharmfulcontent.com/report/>
www.thesafe.g.uardingalliance.org.uk

CEOP:

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/>

Young Minds Crisis Messenger:

85258 – free text service for 24/7 support

NSPCC Helpline:

Phone: 0808 800 5000

Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Mind:

www.mind.org.uk

The Department for Education COVID-19 helpline:

Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

Telephone: 0800 046 8687

Lines are open Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm and weekends 10am to 4pm.

Please see **Appendix 4** for further Support services and contacts

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance is updated, and as a minimum every 3-4 weeks by DSL (Cheryl Payne) or DDSL (Amanda Bishop). At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

Safeguarding and Child protection policy

Remote Education Policy incorporating Microsoft Teams User Agreement and Code of Conduct

Staff code of conduct, including acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships, communications including the use of social media (included within the Staff Handbook)

Whistleblowing

Online/e-Safety

Behaviour Policy and Practice

Health and Safety

Inclusion

Name/job title of reviewer	Date of Review	Date of Governor approval	Suggested date of review
Amanda Bishop Acting Head	January 2021	28 th January 2021	March 2021

Appendix 1: **Support for schools during COVID-19 emergency**

Schools are having to cope with an unprecedented situation at present and are often on the frontline in relation to dealing with parental anxiety and frustration with the difficulties being caused by the crisis. The situation also means that some school staff are having to work off site, reducing the immediate support networks usually available to those still in school.

In addition, Government advice is changing daily as the situation develops and this provides challenges in ensuring that colleagues are kept effectively updated.

Some key LA officers and services are available to provide support and guidance to schools:

Ameliah Rayn Safeguarding in Education Advisor, continues to be available to provide advice and support to schools

Email: Ameliah.Rayn@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

Telephone: 07775-417475

Andy Hough

Head of School Participation and Performance

Email: Andrew.hough@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

Telephone: 07870 278 848

Gary Hipple

Head of School Support and School IT

Email: gary.hipple@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

Telephone: 07971 187288

Lewis Brunton

School Support Manager, HR

Email: lewis.brunton@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

Chantel Langenhoven

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Email:

chantel.langenhoven@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

Telephone: 0208-871-7440

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Email: MASH@wandsworth.gov.uk

Telephone: 0208-871-6622

Out of Hours Service: 0208-871-6000

Schools and Community Psychology Service

Schools can contact their link Educational Psychologist directly or the Head of Service: Tara Midgen

Email: Tara.midgen@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

Ruth Lacey

Head of Safeguarding Standards

Email: ruth.lacey@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

Telephone: 07967-640080

Paul Martland

Head of Commissioning and interim Head of Early Help

Email: paul.martland@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

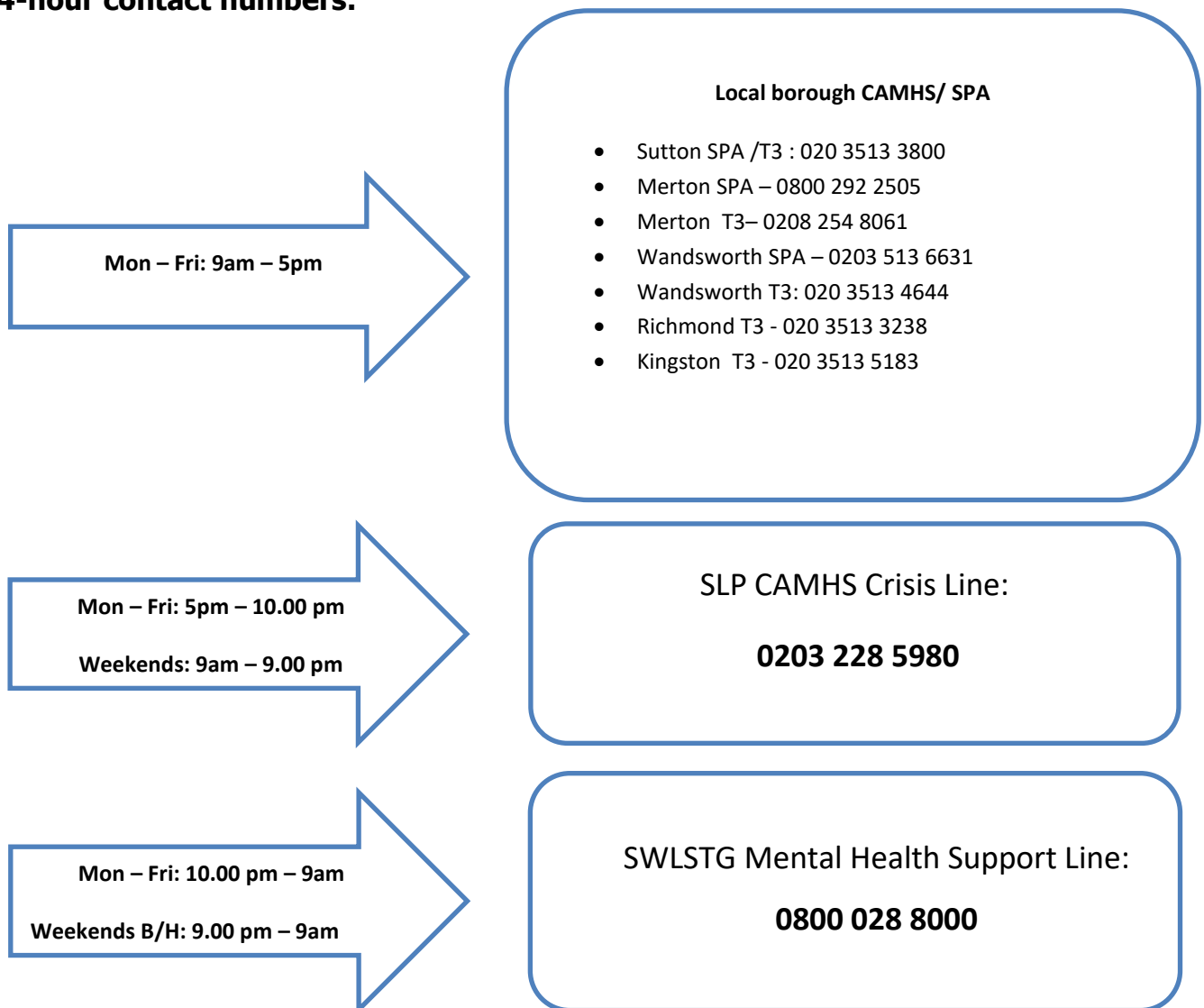
Telephone: 07504-423493

Early Help colleagues are available and are taking calls from families and helping to resolve problems arising as well as contacting families directly when issues have been raised.

Appendix 2: Duty/Crisis line for Young People, Families and Professionals

During COVID 19 CAMHS have reduced Face to face contact to a minimum. However, we are still here to provide support and will often do this by phone or using video. In a crisis young people/Families/Carers in crisis are encouraged to access support by phone.

24-hour contact numbers:



Other numbers

Child line **0800 1111** – calls are free and confidential

HOPE line UK **0800 068 4141**

Samaritans **116 123**

Young Minds Crisis Messenger - provides free, 24/7 crisis support across the UK
mental health crisis - If you need urgent help text YM to 85258

If you need urgent/ life threatening medical attention' call 999 or attend your local A&E

Appendix 3: **Keeping in touch with vulnerable pupils during school closures**

The definition of vulnerable children provided by Department for Education (DfE) during the coronavirus emergency covers the following groups:

- Those who have a social worker
- Those with EHCPs
- Those children with a social worker who fall into the following key groups:
 - Children subject to Child Protection (CP) plan
 - Children with a Child in Need (CiN) plan
 - Children Looked After (CLA)
 - Children currently under assessment by children's social care due to safeguarding concerns

Many schools will also want to add other vulnerable pupils to the list of children who will need to be regularly monitored; examples would be:

- Those who are known to self-harm
- Those who have expressed suicidal thoughts / made previous suicide attempts
- Those with other emotional / mental health concerns (e.g. low mood / high anxiety etc.)
- Those with medical conditions making them additionally vulnerable
- Young Carers
- Particular stresses in the family situation (e.g. housing issues, sibling with disability or poor health etc.)

Currently the key groups have been identified and offered the opportunity to attend school during the closures. However, we know that many families (for a variety of reasons) have declined to accept this offer and the children are at home. Social Care staff are working and will be continuing to monitor those children known to them, but value schools' continued involvement in safety plans and monitoring to ensure children are safeguarded as effectively as possible.

While not in school, children will have reduced access to safe adults outside their family and those who have concerns and worries will have less opportunity to be able to disclose these. It is therefore crucial that each school puts systems in place to make regular contact with identified children and to also provide all children with ways to contact school staff if they have any worries of a safeguarding nature as well as reminding them of national helplines such as Childline. A dedicated telephone number and email address for contact is advised – regular monitoring of these can be shared by key staff members if necessary.

It is important that all contact with identified children (and any new contacts instigated by a child) are recorded in safeguarding systems in the usual way. With many staff working offsite each school will need to establish a system for information to be shared with DSLs and agreement about how records will be kept up to date.

It is also important to realise that in the current situation a parent could fall ill quite quickly and children need clear information about how they can access support if this were to be the case.

It is likely much contact with children and families will be by telephone (although some may be by email). Wherever possible school phones (including school mobiles) should be used but if personal phones have to be used staff should ensure personal numbers are withheld. Simply inputting the number 141 before dialling the number means that the number will be withheld. This works for both landlines and mobile phones. Wherever possible call on a landline (if one is available) or via the parent's mobile number. If talking directly to a child, ask if an adult is present.

Ask staff members to record each conversation – a pro forma is attached with some guidance about possible questions as an aide memoire.

If a child has a safety plan (e.g. for those who self-harm or have expressed suicidal ideation) remind them of how they keep themselves safe.

Many schools will have allocated a group of children / families to particular key individuals on the staff team to facilitate contact. All those involved need to ensure their recording is robust and the DSL is informed of any safeguarding concerns at the earliest opportunity so that decisions about any necessary actions can be taken in the usual way.

Referrals should be made to Children's Social Care via the MARF to MASH as usual. MASH@wandsworth.gov.uk 020 8871 6622. MASH and Referral and Assessment Team social workers are maintaining services to provide assessment and take action to protect children in cases of immediate risk and/ or significant harm being identified. MASH workers will also be able to provide advice if required. The Out Of Hours service will remain contactable on 020 8871 6000.

If key staff undertaking these monitoring tasks are working off school site it is important that they have access to contact details for families and also for other professionals in the network in case there is a need to contact the relevant person quickly. This information needs to be kept securely.

It will also be helpful for key staff to have access to information about other agencies who may be able to provide support around specific issues that arise, in case this is required.

Some schools have already made plans to make direct contact with families by making home visits – if this is considered, risk assessments should be carried out prior to any visit. Generally social care or early help colleagues are better placed to carry out any visits that are required and schools may want to seek advice if visits are planned. If visits are carried out by school staff reasonable social distancing measures should be in place – for example doorstep visits rather than entering family homes and staying at the recommended distance from family members.

Sensible hygiene precautions should be taken. It is important for children to be seen and where possible spoken to directly by the person carrying out the visit.

If school staff maintaining contact become concerned about a vulnerable child/family this should be reported as soon as possible to the child's allocated social worker. Most social workers are working from home, so e-mail alerts are the best option or calls to mobiles if available. If the allocated worker is not contactable (e.g. through illness) schools should contact the line manager if details are known or MASH if the concern is urgent. Ameliah Rayn can also support with facilitating contact with workers if difficulties are being experienced by schools.

If schools are concerned about reasons for families not taking up the offer of a school place they should discuss these concerns with the child's allocated social worker so that they can support with talking to the family and encourage take up where this is considered safe and appropriate.

If schools cannot contact any vulnerable child or family while carrying out routine monitoring and robust attempts have been made (e.g. 3 calls; alternative numbers tried if available) the social worker (or MASH if worker not available) should be alerted to this immediately.

Appendix 4: Support services and contacts

All support services have adapted their working protocols to provide best possible input for children, young people and families during the COVID -19 pandemic. The school will ensure they access any guidance and updates in relation to national and local services and circulate as appropriate to staff members.

Some useful links are below.

General:

The Department for Education COVID-19 helpline:

Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

Telephone: 0800 046 8687 Lines are open Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm and weekends 10am to 4pm.

Government guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

NHS guidance: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Child Support:

- ChildLine: 0800 1111 who are operating a 9am – Midnight service in response to COVID19
- NSPCC Helpline: Phone: 0808 800 5000 Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Online Safety:

- UK Safer Internet Centre: <https://reportharmfulcontent.com/report/>
- CEOP: <https://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-reporting/>
- YouTube moderation guidance for parents: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1YvIfw7obwE&feature=youtu.be>
- Online material promoting terrorism or extremism can be reported anonymously using the Online Tool on the Gov.UK website. <https://www.gov.uk/report-terrorism>
- UK Safer Internet Centre Professionals Online Safety Helpline - 0344 381 4772 <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/helpline/>
- NSPCC guidance 'Undertaking remote teaching safely' <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/news/2020/march/undertaking-remote-teaching-safely>

Mental Health and Wellbeing:

- Young Minds Crisis Messenger: 85258 – free text service for 24/7 support
- Mind: www.mind.org.uk

Looking after your family's mental health indoors

- <https://parentzone.org.uk/article/how-look-after-your-family%E2%80%99s-mental-health-when-you%E2%80%99re-stuck-indoors>

Financial and Food support

- If your work or benefits are affected:
www.citizensadvice.org.uk/health/coronaviruswhat-it-means-for-you/
- Using food banks: citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/help-if-on-a-low-income/using-a-food-bank/
- Local services in Wandsworth: wandsworth.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/publichealth/coronavirus/
- Wandsworth Community Hub and Helpline: A first response for residents who need support to access medical/ care services and food supplies. This helpline can be used for other enquires related to COVID-19, for anyone in need of support - 02088716555 or covid19support@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk.