



COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Holmwood House School and Nursery

Holmwood House School and Nursery : Holmwood House School & Nursery

Reviewed by: Francesca Bradbury & Alexander Mitchell

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Context

From 20 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.

The way we are currently operating in response to coronavirus (COVID-19) is fundamentally different to business as usual, however, a number of important safeguarding principles remain the same:

- with regard to safeguarding, the best interests of children must always continue to come first
- if anyone in a school or college has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act and act immediately
- a DSL or deputy should be available
- it is essential that unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children
- children should continue to be protected when they are online

This addendum of the Holmwood House School and Nursery Safeguarding and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

Context

Vulnerable children

Attendance monitoring

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Reporting a concern

Safeguarding Training and induction

Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

Online safety in schools and colleges

Children and online safety away from school and college

Supporting children not in school

Supporting children in school

Peer on Peer Abuse

Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Francesca Bradbury	School Emergency Number 01206 645044	fcb@holmwood.house dsl@holmwood.house
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Helen Mitchell		hjm@holmwood.house
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Irena De Voy		idv@holmwood.house
Nursery DSL	Karen Travers		karen.travers@holmwood.house
Nursery DDSL	Vicki Shreeve		vas@holmwood.house
Nursery DDSL	Charlotte Taylor		ct@holmwood.house
Headmaster	Alexander Mitchell		headmaster@holmwood.house
Safeguarding Governor	Gregg Davies	Use email	gdavies@blvue.com
Group Education Director	Steven Wade	Use email	swade@blvue.com

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Holmwood House School and Nursery has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Francesca Bradbury

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Helen Mitchell and Irena De Voy

The Designated Safeguarding Lead at the Nursery is: Karen Travers

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads at the Nursery are: Vicki Shreeve and Charlotte Taylor

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 coordinating safeguarding on site; **this will be the Headmaster.** This might include updating and managing access to our child protection online management system, MyConcern, 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.

It is important that all Holmwood House School and Nursery 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.

Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 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 or college 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.

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

Holmwood House School and Nursery 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 Francesca Bradbury.

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 Holmwood House School and Nursery will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, Holmwood House School and Nursery or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Holmwood House School and Nursery will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

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.

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

To support the above, Holmwood House School and Nursery 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, Holmwood House School and Nursery will notify their social worker.

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 MyConcern, which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot their MyConcern from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Headmaster. 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 Headmaster. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Headmaster whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the Headmaster.

Concerns around the Headmaster should be directed to the Safeguarding Governor (Gregg Davies gdavies@blvue.com) or the Group Education Director (Steven Wade/swade@blvue.com) will be contacted directly by the member of staff making the

allegation and one of them will contact the LADO on 0333 013 9797 without the Headmaster's knowledge.

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) even if they miss their refresher training.

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 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 Holmwood House School and Nursery, 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.

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, Holmwood House School and Nursery will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for our 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 Holmwood House School and Nursery are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of

KCSIE 2019. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Holmwood House School and Nursery 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 2019.

Holmwood House School and Nursery will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 of KCSIE 2019 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, Holmwood House School and Nursery will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE 2019.

Children moving schools and colleges

In the scenario that we have children attending another setting, it is the school's responsibility to do whatever we reasonably can to provide the receiving institution with any relevant welfare and child protection information. This will be especially important where children are vulnerable.

For looked-after children, any change in school should be led and managed by the VSH with responsibility for the child.

The receiving institution should be aware of the reason the child is vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them. As a minimum the receiving institution should, as appropriate, have access to a vulnerable child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or, for looked-after children, their personal education plan and know who the child's social worker (and, for looked-after children, who the responsible VSH is). This should ideally happen before a child arrives and, where that is not possible as soon as reasonably practicable.

Any exchanges of information will ideally happen at DSL (or deputy) level, and likewise between special educational needs co-ordinators/named individual with oversight of SEN

provision for children with EHC plans. However, it is acknowledged this may not always be possible. Where this is the case senior leaders should take responsibility.

Whilst the school and nursery must continue to have appropriate regard to data protection and GDPR this does not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Further advice about information sharing can be found at paragraphs 76-83 of KCSIE.

Online safety in school

Holmwood House School and Nursery will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of our online filtering system GoGuardian.

Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

We will ensure we maintain safe IT arrangements in line with current internal standards, pupils' acceptable use agreements, staff code of conduct and any additional staff training issued via email or online INSET.

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 Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care (ESCB) and as required, the police.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the school's code of conduct.

Holmwood House School and Nursery 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:

- 1:1s should be scheduled and shared with parents/carers prior to the session.
- 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 where possible; and the background should be blurred where possible.
- The live class can 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 pupils 'getting on' with their work.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.

- Staff must only use platforms approved by Holmwood House School and Nursery to communicate with pupils
- Staff should keep records of the sessions held, taking registers where appropriate and reporting absent children to Heads of Phase.

It is essential that children working online have very clear reporting routes in place so they can raise any concerns whilst online. During online tutor sessions, pupils will be reminded to report any concerns to their parents, teachers or tutors and advised where they can get to age appropriate practical support from:

- [Childline](#) - for support
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - to report and remove harmful online content
- [CEOP](#) - for advice on making a report about online abuse

During our regular contact with parents and carers we will reinforce the importance of children being safe online. It will be especially important for parents and carers to be aware of what their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and be clear who from the school their child is going to be interacting with online.

We will also emphasise the importance of securing online support from a reputable organisation/individual who can provide evidence that they are safe and can be trusted to have access to children. Support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online includes:

Internet matters (<https://www.internetmatters.org/>) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online

London Grid for Learning (<https://www.lgfl.net/online-safety/resource-centre?s=16>) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online

Net-aware (<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>) - for support for parents and carers from the NSPCC

Parent info (<https://parentinfo.org/>) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online

Thinkuknow (<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>) - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online

UK Safer Internet Centre (<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>) - advice for parents and carers

Supporting children not in school

Holmwood House School and Nursery 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.

Details of this plan must be recorded on MyConcern, 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.

Holmwood House School and Nursery 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 and social media pages.

Holmwood House School and Nursery 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 Holmwood House School and Nursery need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Holmwood House School and Nursery 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 MyConcern.

Supporting children in school

Holmwood House School and Nursery is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

Holmwood House School and Nursery will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headmaster will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

Holmwood House School and Nursery 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.

Holmwood House School and Nursery 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 MyConcern.

Where Holmwood House School and Nursery has concerns about the impact of staff absence, such as our Designated Safeguarding Leads or first aiders, will discuss them immediately with Bellevue and, if necessary, the Essex Safeguarding Children Board.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Holmwood House school and Nursery 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 2019 and of those outlined within the Safeguarding 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 MyConcern and appropriate referrals made.