



## Astrea Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2019 – 2020

### Appendix 5 - COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection

Updated 20.05.2020

**School Name: Cottenham Village College**

**Date: 22/05/2020**

**Date shared with staff: 22/05/2020**

#### **1. Context**

From 20<sup>th</sup> 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 and for children who have a social worker.

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.

In accordance with Government guidance, *Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance for schools and other educational settings* (last updated 15<sup>th</sup> May 2020), schools must plan to reopen from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020, for children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, as well as continuing to offer a place to children of key workers and vulnerable children. From 1<sup>st</sup> June, Vulnerable children are expected to attend.

Schools will only open on 1<sup>st</sup> June provided that the five key tests set by government justify the changes at the time, including that the rate of infection is decreasing and the enabling programmes set out in the UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy are operating effectively.

In preparation for reopening, all Astrea schools will complete a pre-opening Risk Assessment, action plan and checklist, taking account of Safeguarding at every stage.

This addendum of the Astrea Safeguarding and Child Protection policy 2019/2020, contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in line with revised procedures from the local safeguarding partners, in the following areas:

1. Context
2. Vulnerable children
3. Attendance monitoring
4. Designated Safeguarding Lead
5. Reporting a concern
6. Safeguarding Training and induction
7. Children moving schools and colleges
8. Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff



9. Supporting children's Mental health
10. Online safety in schools and colleges
11. Children and online safety away from school and college
12. Supporting children not in school
13. Supporting children in school
14. Peer on Peer Abuse
15. Support from Astrea Safeguarding

## Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Lisa Langley	07540721914	<a href="mailto:Lisa.langley@astreacottenham.org">Lisa.langley@astreacottenham.org</a>
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Sarah Halsey	07966 533 335	Sarah.halsey@astreacottenham.org
Principal	Helen Cassady		headspa@astreacottenham.org
Deputy Director of Safeguarding	Nicola Law	07392 866262	Nicola.law@astreaacademytrust.org
Executive Director of Education, Inclusion and Safeguarding	Nicola Crossley	07393 237674	Nicola.crossley@astreaacademytrust.org
DSL	Ryan Nash		Ryan.nash@astreacottenham.org
DSL	Peter Holt		Peter.holt@astreacottenham.org
DSL	Jos Abbott		Jos.abbott@astreacottenham.org
DSL	Helen Stearn		Helen.stern@astreacottenham.org

## 2. 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 (Child in Need).

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. See *Covid-19 Additional information for SEND information report*.



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) 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.

**Cottenham Village College** 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.

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 **Cottenham Village College** will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, **Cottenham Village College** or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

**Cottenham Village College** will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

### 3. Attendance monitoring

From 1<sup>st</sup> June, schools must resume taking their attendance register (on the MIS) and continue to submit to attendance information to the DfE and Astrea Academy Trust to confirm attendance daily.

**Cottenham Village College** will contact parents/carers on a weekly basis to ascertain whether they intend on sending their children to school for the following week. This will support school in understanding which children will be accessing school and will support with effectively planning and staffing for the expected year groups, key worker children and vulnerable children who are expected to attend. For any parents/carers who do not respond to the weekly correspondence, daily phone calls will be made as per usual attendance tracking procedures to ascertain whereabouts/intention to attend school.

For vulnerable children, **Cottenham Village College** and social workers will discuss expectation to attend and support with any concerns raised – **Cottenham Village College** will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. **Cottenham Village College** 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.

Staff may conduct phone calls and/or home visits to ensure children are safe and well during this period of school closure and phased opening. This may be in response to non-attendance (when child is expected to attend).

To support the above, **Cottenham Village College** 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, **Cottenham Village College** will notify their social worker and discuss options for continuation of education.

#### **4. Designated Safeguarding Lead**

**Cottenham Village College** has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Lisa Langley

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Sarah Halsey

The aim is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site, however 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. If necessary, DSL's may be required to support another Astrea school, if there is a need for DSL support, however, this will only be actioned when agreed on an individual basis with both the Principal's and the Deputy Director of Safeguarding.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader/nominated member of staff will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site **in line with the DSL/SLT rota**

Day to day Safeguarding may include:

- Updating and managing access to child protection online management system, My Concern
- Liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy)
- 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 staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day staff on site will be made aware of 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.

#### **5. Reporting a concern**

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the Astrea Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, this includes making a report via My Concern, which can be done remotely where necessary.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access My Concern, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Deputy DSL or SLT on Rota and Principal. 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 Principal without delay in line with *Astrea Child Protection and safeguarding Policy*. This should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the Principal.

If staff have a concern about the Principal, the staff member should report to:

**Nicola Law, Astrea Deputy Director of Safeguarding** and **Tracy Foster, Astrea Head of HR** without delay.

Astrea Academy Trust HR team and Safeguarding Lead will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

## 6. Safeguarding Training and induction

Face to Face 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 and Annex A 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.

Staff should continue to receive updates and reminders on safeguarding requirements and specific safeguarding concerns regularly.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers, Cottenham Village College, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction, virtually delivered by the DSL.

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

**For movement within the Trust and externally from the Trust, schools should seek assurance that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training. Where there are gaps in learning, please ensure they access level 1 equivalent Safeguarding training – for further support/guidance please contact Astrea Deputy Director of Safeguarding.**

**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.**

## 7. Children moving schools and colleges

Children may not be able to attend their usual school during this time and therefore children may join **Cottenham Village College** for a period of time during their own school's closure period.



Whether another child temporarily joins **Cottenham Village College**, or a child who usually attends **Cottenham Village College** attends another setting, it will be important for any school or college to do whatever they reasonably can to provide the receiving school 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 Virtual School Headteacher with responsibility for the child. The receiving school should be aware of the reason the child is vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them.

**As a minimum the receiving school 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 schools and colleges must continue to have appropriate regard to data protection and GDPR they do 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.

## **8. Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff**

**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, Cottenham Village College will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.**

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, **Cottenham Village College** will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes in line with Astrea Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Astrea Recruitment Policy, 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 **Cottenham Village College** 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.

**Cottenham Village College** 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.



**Cottenham Village College** 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](mailto: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, **Cottenham Village College** will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

## 9. Supporting children's mental health

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. Teachers should be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

From 1<sup>st</sup> June, where resources allow, DSLs (and deputies) will have more time to support staff and children regarding new concerns (and referrals as appropriate) as more children return

DSL's must ensure that 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, in order to best support them upon their return.

Government guidance on [mental health and behaviour in schools](#), can help schools to identify children who might need additional support, and to put this support in place. The guidance sets out how mental health issues can bring about changes in a child's behaviour or emotional state which can be displayed in a range of different ways, all of which could be an indication of an underlying problem. This can include for example being fearful or withdrawn; aggressive or oppositional; or excessive clinginess. Support for pupils and students in the current circumstances can include existing provision in the school or college (although this may be delivered in different ways, for example over the phone for those children still not attending provision) or from specialist staff or support services.

## 10. Online safety in schools and colleges

**Cottenham Village College** will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of a filtering, monitoring and metering system. The DSL/ICT Leads will continue to monitor any notifications from this system.

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

The Acceptable Use Policy Agreement signed by all staff and pupils annually, is still in place during the period of school closure.



## 11. Children and online safety away from school and college

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 Astrea Child Protection and Safeguarding 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 **Cottenham Village College** code of conduct.

**Cottenham Village College** will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Schools may wish to use these resources to understand more about ensuring online education is safe:

- 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.

**Cottenham Village College** will support parents and carers during this time 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, including:

- sites they will be asked to use
- school staff their child will interact with

Maintaining a safe online environment is of utmost importance and **Cottenham Village College** continues to 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.

Parents and carers can access the resources below to keep their children safe online:

- [Thinkuknow](#) provides advice from the National Crime Agency (NCA) on staying safe online
- [Parent info](#) is a collaboration between Parentzone and the NCA providing support and guidance for parents from leading experts and organisations
- [Childnet](#) offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, to set boundaries around online behaviour and technology use, and to find out where to get more help and support
- [Internet matters](#) provides age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls on a range of devices, and a host of practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world
- [London Grid for Learning](#) has support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online, including tips to keep primary aged children safe online
- [Net-aware](#) has support for parents and carers from the NSPCC, including a guide to social networks, apps and games



- [Let's Talk About It](#) has advice for parents and carers to keep children safe from online radicalisation
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) has tips, advice, guides and other resources to help keep children safe online, including parental controls offered by home internet providers and safety tools on social networks and other online services

Childline and CEOP hyperlinks are accessible on all schools websites.

**Students and parents can use Report a Concern which is monitored by the DSL/Duty DSL with the link on Cottenham Village College website to enable children to report concerns to a member of duty staff.**

To report any harmful or upsetting content Harmful, support can be accessed by:

- reporting harmful online content to the [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)
- getting government advice and trusted resources from [Educate Against Hate](#) on safeguarding from radicalisation, building resilience to extremism, and promoting shared values

## 12. Supporting children not in school

**Cottenham Village College** is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people.

During the period of enhanced measures to reduce social contact, including during phased opening, **Cottenham Village College** will ensure that all **vulnerable children are contacted by phone at least weekly**, with children spoken to (for vulnerable children who are not attending school).

Regular Liaison with social care to continue (for all children open to their service) to ensure that children are regularly seen if not attending school - home visits should continue to be conducted by social care and school on a weekly basis where required and agreed between services.

A Home-visit is a door step visit, being mindful of social distancing, where staff are not to enter the house of a child/young person but to stand at least 2 metres/6ft from the door and speak with both parents and child/young person.

Any planned CP/Multi-Agency review meetings to be accessed via phone/conference calls, as necessary.

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 My Concern, 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.

**Cottenham Village College** and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan. The DSL and social workers will work together to ensure communication is regular, in line with any plans (updated at least once a fortnight) and may support



one another to conduct visits where appropriate. Where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

**Cottenham Village College** 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. As stated in section 8, we continue to support children in and outside of school, making referrals to provide additional support where necessary.

**Cottenham Village College** 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 My Concern.

### **13. Supporting children in school**

**Cottenham Village College** is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students. Our school continues to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Principal will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

**Cottenham Village College** 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.

**Cottenham Village College** 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 CPOMS.

Where **Cottenham Village College** has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – will discuss them immediately with the trust.

### **14. Peer on Peer Abuse**

**Cottenham Village College** recognises that during the closure and as we moved into phased opening, 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 Astrea Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The school will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multi-agency partners required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded on My Concern and appropriate referrals made.

Support and reporting Bullying or abuse online can be accessed via **Cottenham Village College** by reporting on **Report a Concern which is monitored by the DSL/Duty DSL with the link on Cottenham Village College website to enable children to report concerns to a member of duty staff.**



and by accessing the key agencies as listed below.

- the [National Crime Agency's Child Exploitation and Online Protection command](#)
- [Anti-Bullying Alliance](#) for children who are being bullied

### **15.Support from Astrea Academy Trust**

Astrea central team continues to be available to provide support and guidance to colleagues as appropriate.

The Deputy Director of Safeguarding continues to be available to all DSL's and Principal's in order to carry out their role effectively. This may include remotely accessing My Concern files for the purpose of quality assurance, support, guidance and direction.

The Deputy Director of Safeguarding will also provide regular group and individual supervision sessions. This may take the form of an online meeting.