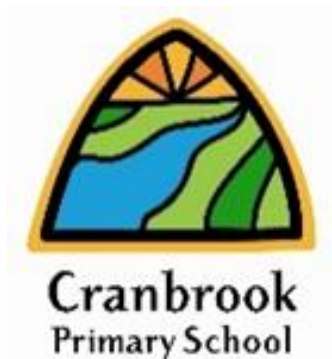# COVID-19 amendments to the Child Protection Policy

Annex to the LB Redbridge Model Policy:

Cranbrook Primary School

School leaders may adopt or use this model as a starting point for a school safeguarding and child protection policy for Covid19. The model policy should be tailored by the school to meet its needs and context.

11ᵗʰ January 2021

This interim guidance has been developed as a response to [Government's guidance](#), however, please be aware this could be subject to change as legislation develops. Please make sure you have the latest version of this document. There were previous updates in April and June 2020.

There have been more changes within our setting in response to the outbreak of Covid19. Many young people are again at home and staffing is likely to be significantly affected through illness and self-isolation.

Despite the changes, the school's Child Protection Policy is *fundamentally* the same: children and young people always come first, staff should respond robustly to safeguarding concerns and contact the DSL in line with the established safeguarding procedure.

This annex sets out some of the adjustments in line with the changed arrangements in the school and following advice from government and local agencies.

The current school position and local advice

Any updates from the 3 safeguarding partners including information on changes in arrangements for CP Conferences and Looked After Reviews can be found here:

https://www.redbridgescp.org.uk/

Reporting arrangements

The school arrangements continue in line with our child protection policy.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

Kimberly McKoy 02085182562 kmckoy@cranbrookprimary.redbridge.sch.uk

The Deputy DSLs are:

Jas Leverton jas.leverton@redbridge.gov.uk

Darshan Kaur darshan.kaur@redbridge.gov.uk

Cassim Bana cbana@cranbrookprimary.redbridge.sch.uk

Catriona Prasad cwalsh@cranbrookprimary.redbridge.sch.uk

Catherine Smith csmith@cranbrookprimary.redbridge.sch.uk

Beverley Boothe beverley.boothe@redbridge.gov.uk

The school's approach ensures the DSL or a deputy is always on site while the school is open. In the unusual circumstance this is not possible the DSL or Deputy DSL will be contactable and the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team will email all staff by 8am to advise they are acting in an on-site safeguarding role together with contact details for the DSL or Deputy DSL.

Staff will continue to follow the Child Protection procedure and advise the safeguarding leads immediately about concerns they have about any child, whether in school or not. COVID-19 means a need for increased vigilance due to the pressures on services, families and young people, rather than a reduction in our standards.

DSLs and Deputies need to ensure they have checked with the Thresholds Document before making referrals to MASH and consider if the referral would be best placed with Early Help, CAMHS or Education and Welfare

The arrangements for contacting children's services are:

If you have concerns about a child's welfare or suspect that a child is being neglected or abused, please telephone Redbridge Council on:

020 8708 3885 from 9.00am to 5.00pm

020 8708 5897 (after 5.00pm and weekends)

Alternatively, you may complete and submit a LBR Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF) Template to CPAT.referrals@redbridge.gov.uk.

For immediate help ring the police on 999.

Should a child in the school's view be at risk of significant harm and local agencies are not able to respond, the school will immediately follow the safeguarding children partnership escalation procedure, available here:

Redbridge

https://www.redbridgescp.org.uk/professionals/what-should-you-do-when-there-is-a-professional-disagreement-about-a-child/

Vulnerable Children

Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

• are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child;

• have an education, health and care (EHC) plan;

• have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:

- children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services
- adopted children or children on a special guardianship order
- those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
- those living in temporary accommodation
- those who are young carers
- those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
- care leavers
- others at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself is not a 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.

Cranbrook Primary school 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 increased 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 Cranbrook Primary school will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

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

Attendance During National Lockdown

- Schools, alternative provisions, special schools, colleges and wraparound childcare and other out of school activities should **allow only vulnerable children and young people and the children of critical workers to attend.**
- All other pupils and students should not attend and learn remotely.
- Pupils who are self-isolating should not attend school
- Clinically extremely vulnerable pupils are advised not to attend school
- Schools should continue to record attendance in the register
- Schools should follow up on absences of the pupils expected to be in school but where a parent wishes for their child to be absent it is expected that schools will authorise the absences during this national lockdown period.
- Absence will not be penalised

Vulnerable children

- Includes children who have a social worker, an EHCP plan or who may be vulnerable for another reason at local discretion (otherwise vulnerable).   See attached link. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision
- If vulnerable children and young people do not attend, schools should work together with the Local Authority and Social worker (where applicable) to ascertain reasons. Schools should work with LA and Social worker to encourage the child or young person to attend their education provision particularly where the social worker agrees that the child or young person's attendance would be appropriate.
- Where vulnerable individuals are self-isolating it is important that schools put systems in place to keep in contact with them

- When a vulnerable child is asked to self-isolate schools should notify social worker if they have one. They should then agree the best way to maintain contact and offer support to the individual
- Schools should also have in place procedures to check if a vulnerable child is able to access remote education, to support them to access it (as far as possible) and to regularly check if they are doing so
- Schools should use their pre-Covid procedures to attempt to contact pupils who are either not engaging with remote learning or not attending provision where onsite offer has been accepted.

Recording attendance

- Pupils not eligible to be in school should be marked as code X. They are not attending because they are following public health advice.
- Vulnerable children are still expected to attend school full time therefore they should **not** be marked X if they are not in school. The usual attendance codes should be used i.e. present, medical etc. Exceptions are if they are shielding, self-isolating or quarantining when code X will apply.
- If the parent of a vulnerable child wishes their child to be absent the parent should let the school know.
- Schools are expected to grant applications for leave of absence given the circumstances. This should be recorded as code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) unless other authorised code is more applicable

Alternative Provision Schools

- Should remain open to vulnerable children and young people and children of critical workers
- AP schools to actively encourage those they consider vulnerable to attend provision. Robust remote learning to be provided for those not attending
- Hospital schools to continue to provide full time education when safe and feasible to do so

Critical Workers

- Children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical worker can go to school if required. This includes parents who may be working from home

Education Welfare Service Approach to following up school attendance of vulnerable pupils during Covid-19

- Regular liaison with schools about their vulnerable cohort with offers of onsite provision
- Providing schools with updates relating to social care activities/interventions
- Assisting colleagues in other service areas within Education and Inclusion by providing information held on both our system and social care system.
- Liaising with housing and benefits where necessary to obtain information relating to family's whereabouts and/or contact details where necessary.
- EWO's undertaking welfare calls to check on wellbeing, identify any problems and remind families that their children have an offer of a school place.

- Feedback provided to schools following the welfare calls.
- Following up with colleagues where problems have been identified during telephone calls.
- Continuing our multi agency working by attending CIN meetings, core groups and child protection conferences.
- Continuing to attend multi agency panels (for those that are still being held) to make sure that we exchange information about vulnerable families.
- Telephone support network available to schools to discuss vulnerable pupils and decide on next steps.
- Using video calling to families.
- Home visits.
- As at 07.01.2021 the DfE has disapplied our powers to issue penalty notices and initiate prosecutions under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 until the end of day on 6th February 2021.

Please contact Sue Bendon on 0208 708 6013 or sue.bendon@redbridge.gov.uk if you require assistance in following up any vulnerable pupils that you have been unsuccessful in contacting. Education Welfare Service can utilise options as above to assist you.

Staff will be aware of increased risk

The pressures on children and their families now are significant. There will be heightened awareness of family pressures through being contained in a small area, poverty, and financial or health anxiety. These areas should be considered in the setting of any work for children to undertake at home (including recognising the impact of online learning – see below). Staff will be aware of the mental health of both children and their parents and carers, informing the DSL about any concerns.

Peer on peer abuse

We recognise the potential for abuse to go on between young people, especially in the context of a school closure or partial closure. Our staff will remain vigilant to the signs of peer-on-peer abuse, including those between young people who are not currently attending our provision. Extra care should be taken where groups have mixed age, developmental stages, are attending other schools as an interim measure and similar. When contacting these families our staff will ask about relationships between learners.

We also address the issue of peer-on-peer abuse in our remote learning curriculum.

Mental Health

The coronavirus outbreak may have caused significant mental health or wellbeing difficulties for some children. It is important to recognise that while 'getting back to normal' is important and will be reassuring for many, school staff will need to consider how to support:

• individual children who have found the transition back into lockdown hard to manage

• those who have developed anxieties related to the virus

• those about whom there are safeguarding concerns

• those who may make safeguarding disclosures once they are back in schools

Some children may also have experienced bereavements in their immediate family or wider circle of friends or family or had increased/new caring responsibilities. All children will have missed the routine of school, seeing their friends, and being supported by their teachers and other adults in the school.

Mental health resources that the school has for children, staff and parents and list them here:

- Class teachers work with children online and continually assess the well-being of our pupils at home.
- Well-being calls are made weekly to our vulnerable families
- Weekly newsletter from the HT promotes well-being
- Small group work with children (Feedback on learning and Well-being)

    SEMH (Social Emotional Mental Health) and Well-being Team:
- DSL for Mental Health and Well-being – leads and coordinates with SLT on mental health and well-being
- Learning Mentors – work with children
- ELSAs (Emotional Learning Support Assistants) – Trained by the LBR REWT team to support children
- Parent Support Advisor (PSA)– Supports families around a range of needs
- Play Therapist – Supports specific children and families
- Mental Health First Aiders (10 across the school) – support children and staff (when needed)
- INSET and training dedicated to WB – Staff and children
- Regular WB tips item on staff briefing agenda
- Phase leaders work with teams to check on MHWB of adults
- Wellness and Yoga sessions – Yoga and mindfulness introduced as part of the curriculum
- Sign posting resources for staff
- MHWB Team poster around the school – children know who the WB Team members are
- Recovery Curriculum – Please write in a statement
- LBR Network Meetings – School keeps up to date on how to best support children, staff and families
- School Website - resources
- Workshops – (Pre Covid 19):
  Parent WB Fair: Parents engage with outside agencies on needs and WB.
  Parent workshops through the Redbridge College – Therapy through Art/Music/Meditation/Yoga

Online Risks

Young people will be using the internet more during this period. The school may also use online approaches to deliver training or support. Staff will be aware of the signs and signals of cyberbullying and other risks online and apply the same child-centred safeguarding practices as when children were learning at the school.

• The school continues to ensure appropriate filters and monitors are in place

• Our governing body will review arrangements to ensure they remain appropriate

• The school has taken on board guidance from the UK Safer Internet Centre on safe remote learning and guidance for safer working practice from the Safer Recruitment Consortium. We have reviewed the code of conduct and information sharing policy accordingly.

The children access home learning via live MS Teams sessions, MS Class Notebook and the school's website.

Please refer to the 'Remote Learning Policy' and 'Remote Learning safeguarding best practice 2021' document.

The UK Safer Internet Centre's professional online safety helpline also provides support for the children's workforce with any online safety issues they face. Local authorities may also be able to provide support.

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 CPS child protection policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required the police.

Recently published guidance from the UK Safer Internet Centre on safe remote learning and from the London Grid for Learning on the use of videos and livestreaming could help plan online lessons and/or activities and plan them safely.

All staff **must** make considerable efforts to ensure the safety of our children who are asked to work online. The guiding rationale is the same as those set in our staff Code of Conduct policy. We always ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

An essential part of the online planning process will be ensuring children who are being asked to work online have very clear reporting routes in place so they can raise any concerns whilst online. The following routes for reporting can be used:

- Childline - for support
- UK Safer Internet Centre - to report and remove harmful online content
- CEOP - for advice on making a report about online abuse
- Email school: admin.cranbrookprimary@redbridge.gov.uk
- Call school (8.30-3pm) to speak to the DSL or Deputy DSL

During this time, communications with parents and children should be used to 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 asked to access and be clear who from the school their child is going to be interacting with online.

In our communications with parents and carers, we remind them of the importance of securing online support (if needed) 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 - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- London Grid for Learning - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- Net-aware - for support for parents and careers from the NSPCC
- Parent info - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online

- [Thinkuknow](#) - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - advice for parents and carers

• Staff have discussed the risk that professional boundaries could slip during this exceptional period and been reminded of the school's code of conduct and importance of using school systems to communicate with children and their families.

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 that 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 code of conduct.

Cranbrook Primary school will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements. The schools Online Policy will be updated and reflect and online learning.

Below are some things to consider around safeguarding 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. Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred
- Staff should ensure that there are no identifying features that would allow their home address or family members to be identified
- The live class should be recorded by the teacher only so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed. The staff in the lesson will ensure that nobody else can record the session
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time
- Staff must only use platforms, emails and phone numbers provided by the school to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held
- The link or meeting ID for the session is never shared on public platforms
- Consider setting up a waiting from where you can see who is entering the session. Disable any mechanisms that would allow a young person to share their screen or send messages
- Do not start a meeting until there are 2 staff in the meeting. There must be at least 2 staff in the meeting at all times.
- Any concerns or incidents that arise during an online live session to be raised with the DSL as soon as possible according to the safeguarding policy
- Students are reminded of who they can contact within the school for help or support if an incident arises during online learning.

[The Key](#) have some useful things to consider around specific scenarios.

For more information please refer to: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-help-with-remote-education

This list will be updated by the school as and when needed in line with local and national guidance.

The school's safeguarding team are involved as part of the planning process for online learning. UK Safer Internet Helpline is a source of support for staff.

Parents and carers

Parents and carers have received information about keeping children safe online with peers, the school, other education offers they may access and the wider internet community. We have set out the school's approach, including the sites children will asked to access and set out who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online. Parents have been offered the following links:

- Internet matters - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- London Grid for Learning - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- Net-aware - for support for parents and careers from the NSPCC
- Parent info - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- Thinkuknow - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- UK Safer Internet Centre - advice for parents and carers
- Free additional support for staff in responding to online safety issues can be accessed from the Professionals Online Safety Helpline at the UK Safer Internet Centre.

Allegations or concerns about staff

With such different arrangements young people could be at greater risk of abuse from staff or volunteers. We remind all staff to maintain the view that 'it could happen here' and to immediately report any concern, no matter how small, to the safeguarding team.

Any staff or volunteers from outside our setting will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of the risks and know what they need to do if they are concerned.

We have confirmed the arrangements to contact the LADO at the local authority remain unchanged:

Redbridge

Helen Curtis, 020 8708 5350

helen.curtis@redbridge.gov.uk

Cranbrook Primary School 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.

Cranbrook Primary School 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.

New staff or volunteers

New starters must have an induction before starting or on their first morning with the DSL or a deputy. They must read the school child protection policy, the behaviour policy, the whistleblowing policy and the code of conduct. The DSL or deputy will ensure new recruits know who to contact if worried about a child and ensure the new starters are familiar with the child protection procedure.

If staff or volunteers are transferring in from other registered education or childcare settings for a temporary period to support the care of children, we will seek evidence from their setting that

• the member of staff has completed relevant safeguarding training in line with other similar staff or volunteers,

• they have read Part I and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and

• where the role involves regulated activity and the appropriate DBS check has been undertaken by that setting we will undertake a written risk assessment to determine whether a new DBS would need to be undertaken. It may be in these exceptional times we can rely on the DBS undertaken by their setting.

Our child protection procedures hold strong:

• Volunteers may not be left unsupervised with children until suitable checks have been undertaken. People supervising volunteers must be themselves in regulated activity, able to provide regular, day to day supervision and reasonable in all circumstances to protect the children.

• The school will undertake a written risk assessment on the specific role of each volunteer to decide whether to obtain an enhanced DBS check (with barred list information) for all staff and volunteers new to working in regulated activity in line with DBS guidance.

• When undertaking ID checks on documents for the DBS it is reasonable to initially check these documents online through a live video link and to accept scanned images of documents for the purpose of applying for the check. The actual documents will then be checked against the scanned images when the employee or volunteer arrives for their first day.

• The school will update the Single Central Record of all staff and volunteers working in the school, including those from other settings. This will include the risk assessment around the DBS. A record will be kept by [insert arrangements] of who is working in the school each day.

In schools where Covid19 testing is taking place

Volunteers

Cranbrook Primary school will use volunteers to assist in handing out and securing COVID-19 test kits to students and staff members. Other duties may be required such as building test kits, cleaning down areas and directing people.

Under no circumstances will a volunteer in respect of whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Volunteers who, on an unsupervised basis provide personal care on a one-off basis in SCHOOL NAME, will be in regulated activity. This means that if a volunteer is administrating a COVID-19 test whilst un-supervised, they will be in regulated activity and therefore require an Enhanced DBS with Barred List check.

Existing volunteers in regulated activity do not have to be re-checked if they have already had a DBS check (which includes barred list information).

Supervision must be:

•   by a person who is in regulated activity.

•   regular and day to day; and

•   reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children.

In appointing volunteers, the school will follow safer recruitment processes.

New children at the school

Where children join our school from other settings we will require confirmation from the DSL whether they have a Safeguarding File or SEN statement/EHCP. This file must be provided securely before the child begins at our school and a call made from our DSL or a deputy to the placing school's DSL to discuss how best to keep the child safe. In some unusual circumstance this may not be possible. Information provided must include contact details for any appointed social worker and where relevant for the Virtual School Head. Safeguarding information about children placed in our school will be recorded on our safeguarding system, will be securely copied to the placing school DSL and will be securely returned to the placing school on completion of the child's placement with us so there is a continuous safeguarding record for the child.

The DSL will undertake a risk assessment in respect of any new information received, considering how risks will be managed and which staff need to know about the information. This will be recorded on our safeguarding recording system.

This policy has been remotely approved by Governors on 4th February 2021 and is available on the school website at link https://www.cranbrookprimaryschool.com/keeping-safe