

ALAMEDA MIDDLE SCHOOL



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COVID-19 SCHOOL CLOSURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

JANUARY 2021

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1. CONTEXT

The addendum sets out changes to our normal Child Protection and Safeguarding policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance Coronavirus: safeguarding in school, colleges and other providers. Unless covered here, our normal child protection and safeguarding policy continues to apply.

The addendum is subject to change, in response to any new or updated guidance the government or our local safeguarding partners announce.

"As you know on Monday 4 January, the Prime Minister announced a national lockdown in order to reduce the spread of COVID-19, which has now come into effect. As part of this announcement it was made clear that vulnerable children and children of critical workers would be able to send their child to school if they need to.

The latest Government guidance published on the 7 January says: 'Parents and carers who are critical workers should keep their children at home if they can'. To try and support as many pupils and parents as possible, we are asking critical workers to think very carefully before sending your child to school. If you are able to keep your children at home, then please do so. We appreciate this is difficult and the work you do is critical to the Coronavirus response however, schools that find themselves at capacity will prioritise the following vulnerable children before critical workers".

Central Bedfordshire – Sue Harrison Director of Children's Services

In this addendum, where we refer to vulnerable children our definition is in line with Central Bedfordshire guidance.

- Children or young people with a Child Protection Plan, Looked After Children and children with Education, Health and Care Plans
- Children previously on a Child Protection Plan or previously Looked After
- Those with a special guardianship order Central Bedfordshire Council Priory
- Children with a Child in Need Plan



2. KEY CONTACTS

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Louise Fox	01525 750900	lfox@alamdeamiddleschool.org.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Kerstie Richardson	01525 750900	krichardson@alamedamiddleschool.org.uk
Headteacher	Maxine Warner	01525 750900	mwarner@alamedamiddleschool.org.uk
Chair of Governors	Simon Ratcliffe		

3. CORE PRINCIPLES

We will follow the statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe In Education.

We will always have regards for the following important safeguarding principles:

- The best interests of the children must come first
- If anyone has a safeguarding concerns about any child, they should act immediate
- A Designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy should be available at all times during the working school day.
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online

4. VULNERABLE CHILDREN

In this addendum, where we refer to vulnerable children our definition is in line with Central Bedfordshire guidance.

- Children or young people with a Child Protection Plan, Looked After Children and children with Education, Health and Care Plans
- Children previously on a Child Protection Plan or previously Looked After
- Those with a special guardianship order Central Bedfordshire Council Priory
- Children with a Child in Need Plan

Those pupils 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.

5. REPORTING CONCERNS

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

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS from home, they should email the DSL and deputy safeguarding lead. 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 they should continue to follow the Alameda Whistle blowing policy.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Simon Ratcliffe.

6. DSL (AND DEPUTY) ARRANGEMENTS

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 remotely.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

This might include updating and managing access to child protection online management system, CPOMS 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 Alameda Middle School staff 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 and Deputy safeguarding lead will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which will be conducted remotely.



7. WORKING WITH OTHER AGENCIES

Alameda Middle School will continue to liaise and work with Children's Services 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:

- Louise Fox for all children with an allocated social worker
- Kerstie Richardson for all looked-after and previously looked after children.

There is an expectation that vulnerable pupils will attend our 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 named social worker and the DSL/deputy will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent. Alameda Middle School will share the names of those attending with allocated social workers to discuss their views on attendance/non-attendance.

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

Alameda Middle School will encourage our vulnerable children to attend a school.

8. ATTENDANCE MONITORING

As most children will not be attending school during this period of school closure we will not be completing our normal attendance registers or following our usual procedures to follow up non – attendance.

The exception to this is where any child we expect to attend school during the closure does not attend, or stops attending.

All children with an allocated social worker will be contacted by members of the safeguarding team to inform when a pupil does not attend. DSL will update social workers of any changes.

The DfE has introduced a daily online attendance form to keep a record of children of critical workers and vulnerable children who are attending school. This allows for a record of attendance for safeguarding purposes and allows schools to provide accurate, up-to-date data to the department on the number of children taking up places.



To support the above, Alameda Middle School will, when communicating with parents/ 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, Alameda Middle School will notify their social worker.

9. SAFEGUARDING TRAINING AND INDUCTION

We will make sure all staff and volunteers are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) .

All staff have read this addendum.

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive

- A safeguarding induction – face to face or remotely.
- A copy of our Child Protection and Safeguarding policy (and this addendum)
- Read and understand Keeping Children Safe In Education part 1

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.

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 and Safeguarding policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

10. SAFER RECRUITMENT/VOLUNTEERS AND MOVEMENT OF STAFF

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



When recruiting new staff, Alameda Middle School will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) (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 Alameda Middle School 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.

Alameda Middle 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.

Alameda Middle 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.

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, Alameda Middle School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

11. ONLINE SAFETY IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Alameda Middle School will continue to provide a safe environment, including online learning. We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school.

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

12. 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 reported in line with our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

Online teaching should follow the same safeguarding principles as if they were in school.

Staff delivering any live lessons and pre-recorded lessons from home must



- Use the blurring tool or a plain background
- Be professional in all conduct as if they were in school, for example in terms of their dress
- Ensure they are in an uninterrupted environment, where pupils will not see or hear any other members of their household

13. EXPECTATIONS OF PUPILS

During this period of school closure pupils are learning remotely and both those pupils in school and at home are expected to follow the following.

- Pupils should only use the chat function in Google Classroom for educational purposes e.g. asking/ answering a question; asking for clarification. It is not for socializing with other pupils.
- Type/write as if you were speaking to your teacher directly- showing our Alameda school values.
- Pupils must have their camera off at all times
- Pupils must have their microphones off unless requested by their teacher to unmute.
- If a member of staff leaves the lesson due to unforeseen circumstances, i.e. internet connection breaks down all pupils must exit the lesson immediately.

Alameda Middle School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

14. SUPPORTING CHILDREN NOT IN SCHOOL

Alameda Middle School 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.

The communication plan is shared with all relevant staff and is updated on a regular basis by the DSL and deputy safeguarding lead to understand patterns of concern. The 'check-ins' frequency and method is confirmed with student/ parent. Students are flagged "red" if contact has not been able to be made or if the student is struggling with the current situation. This plan will be reviewed regularly (at least once weekly) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The check-ins can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits (in line with social distancing). Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded in discussion with the DSL and DDSL.



Alameda Middle School and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website, through regular newsletters and through the daily bulletin with staff as and when appropriate.

15. MENTAL HEALTH

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

We will continue to signpost all pupil, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time. This will include the government COVID -19 guidance on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.

Alameda Middle School 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.

16. SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN SCHOOL

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

Alameda Middle School 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.

Where Alameda Middle School Academy has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – will discuss them immediately with the LA

17. PEER ON PEER ABUSE

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

Where a school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, they will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within of the Child Protection Policy.



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

Concerns and actions must be recorded on CPOMS and appropriate referrals made.

18. WORKING WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

We will make sure parents and carers:

- Are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online through our website and newsletters
- Know what our school is asking children to do online, where relevant, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

Addendum added: 7th January 2021

Author: Louise Fox (DSL)

