Annex to Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy Lent Term 2021

Context
The way schools and colleges are currently operating in response to coronavirus (COVID-19) is fundamentally different to ‘business as usual’. We are now operating our remote learning programme and we have a small number of children on site, these being international boarders, vulnerable pupils or the children of key workers. While the underpinning principles of KCSIE remain pertinent clearly the safeguarding challenges are different and focus mainly on potential difficulties in family life and the challenges of unacceptable online behaviour.

Version control and dissemination
This is version 1.0 of this annex. It will be reviewed by the DSL or deputy DSL on a weekly basis as circumstances continue to evolve or following updated Department for Education advice or guidance. It is available on the school website and is made available to staff on the school’s intranet.

We will ensure that on any given day any staff or volunteers in attendance will be aware of who the DSL and deputy DSLs are and how they can be contacted.

Safeguarding priority
During these challenging times the safeguarding of all children – whether they are currently at home or in attendance – continues to be our priority. The following fundamental safeguarding principles remain the same:

- The best interests of children continue to come first
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern, they will act immediately
- A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy DSL will always be available
- No unsuitable people will be allowed to gain access to children
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online.

Current school position
We currently have 22 boarders resident on site. Other day pupils may attend and will be registered accordingly.

Safeguarding partners’ advice
We continue to work closely with the Shropshire Safeguarding Partnership, and we will ensure this annex is consistent with any advice they provide.

Roles and responsibilities
The roles and responsibilities for safeguarding in our school remain in line with our Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

If possible, the DSL and at least one deputy DSL will be available on site during the school day. Where this is not possible, we will:
• have a trained DSL or deputy DSL available by phone and/or online video; or
• ensure we have access to a trained DSL or deputy DSL from another school or college by phone and/or online video.

Vulnerable children
Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with EHC plans. We currently have 1 vulnerable child at the school.

Increased vulnerability or risk
Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. Staff will be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils’ work where they are at home. If we are providing for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we will ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

Our staff and volunteers will be aware of the mental health of children and their parents and carers and will contact the DSL or a deputy if they have any concerns.

Reporting concerns about children or staff
The importance of all staff and volunteers acting immediately on any safeguarding concerns remains. Staff and volunteers will continue to follow our published procedures and advise the DSL of any concerns they have about any child, including those who are not attending school.

The varied arrangements in place as a result of the COVID-19 measures do not remove the risks that children may face from staff or volunteers. As such, it remains extremely important that any allegations of abuse made against staff or volunteers attending the school are dealt with thoroughly and efficiently and in accordance with our published procedures.

Staff training and induction
All our DSLs have up to date training with either the NSPCC or the Shropshire Safeguarding Partnership.

All current school staff have received safeguarding training and have read Part One and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education. If any new staff are recruited or volunteers join us, they will receive a safeguarding induction in accordance with our Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

If staff from another setting attend the school site then, in line with government guidance, we will not undertake any additional safeguarding checks if the setting providing those staff confirm that:

• the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children’s barred list check and, that in the opinion of that setting, nothing resulted from those checks that provided any caused for concern
• there are no safeguarding investigations into the conduct of that individual
• the individual remains suitable to work with children.

The Safeguarding Team can be contacted at the following email addresses:

• Mike Tonks mit@shrewsbury.org.uk
• Anna Peak arp@shrewsbury.org.uk
• Henry Farmer hpf@shrewsbury.org.uk
• Lauren Temple lrt@shrewsbury.org.uk
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, we will continue to follow our Safer Recruitment policy.

For volunteers we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to engage in regulated activity.

It is essential from a safeguarding perspective that we are aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers are on our school site and that the appropriate checks have been carried out on those individuals. We will continue to maintain our single central record (SCR) during these measures to ensure we have this awareness.

Peer on peer abuse
In line with Part five of KCSIE 2020, we recognise that children can abuse their peers and our staff are clear about the school’s policy and procedures regarding peer on peer abuse. All peer on peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. We also recognise that abuse can still occur during a school closure or partial closure and between those children who do attend the school site during these measures. Our staff will remain vigilant and will always follow our published procedures.

Online safety
It is likely that children will be using the internet and engaging with social media far more during this time. Our staff are aware of the signs of cyberbullying and other online risks and our filtering and monitoring software remains in use during this time to safeguarding and support children.

Our staff will follow the process for online safety set out in our Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and our Anti-Bullying Policy.

Staff who interact with children online will continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. If a staff member is concerned about a child, that staff member will follow the approach set out in this annex and report that concern to the DSL or to a deputy DSL.

New children at the school
Children may join the school from other settings. When they do, we will seek from those settings the relevant welfare and child protection information. This is relevant for all children that join us, but it will be especially important where children are vulnerable. For vulnerable children we will ensure we understand the reasons for the vulnerability and any arrangements in place to support them. As a minimum we will seek access to that 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).

Ideally this will happen before a child arrives but where that is not possible it will happen 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 our school senior leaders will take responsibility.

The DSL will undertake a risk assessment based on the information received, considering how risks will be managed and which staff need to know the information.
Supporting children not in school

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive additional pastoral support in school, they will ensure that a communication plan is in place to support that child and the details will be recorded by the relevant Hsm. It will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains current during these measures.

MJT January 2021