

**COVID-19 school closure
arrangements for Safeguarding
and Child Protection at
Portway Junior School
UPDATED January 2021**

1. Context

From 5th January 2021, 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.

This addendum of the Portway Junior School Safeguarding, and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

1.	Context	2
3.	Vulnerable children	3
4.	Attendance monitoring	4
5.	Designated Safeguarding Lead	4
6.	Reporting a concern	5
7.	Safeguarding Training and induction	5
8.	Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff	5
9.	Online safety in schools and colleges	6
10.	Children and online safety away from school and college	7
11.	Supporting children not in school	7
12.	Supporting children in school	7
13.	Peer on Peer Abuse	8

Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead/ Headteacher	Tim Deery	01264 352060	t.deery@portway-jun.hants.sch.yk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Deputy Headteacher	Vicky Windross	01264 352060	v.windross@portway-jun.hants.sch.uk
Designated safeguarding Lead Inclusion Manager	Evelyn Smith	01264 352060	e.smith@portway-jun.hants.sch.uk
Chair of Governors	Esnay Burns	01264 352060	Contact via adminoffice@portway-jun.hants.sch.uk

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, who will be risk-assessed in consultation with the Local Authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school 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.
- Adopted children
- Young Carers
- Those living in temporary accommodation
- Considered vulnerable by the school/Local authority

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Leads (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.

Core principles

We will follow the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

- We will always have regard for these important safeguarding principles:
- The best interests of children must come first
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should act on it immediately
- A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy should be available at all times (see section 4 for details of our arrangements)
- It's essential that unsuitable people don't enter the school workforce or gain access to children
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online

Working with other agencies:

Portway Junior 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, the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children and any other relevant safeguarding partners, to help keep children safe.

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 Portway Junior School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

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

Portway Junior School 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 non-attendance.

Portway Junior School and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – the school will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not, either by telephone or email, from a designated member of staff.

How will this look in our school?

To support the above, Portway Junior School, when communicating with parents/carers will confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available. This will be done, either by telephone or email, from a designated member of staff.

In all circumstances, where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, we will notify their social worker.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Portway Junior School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and two Deputy DSLs.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Tim Deery (Headteacher)

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Vicky Windross (Deputy Headteacher) and Evelyn Smith (Inclusion Manager).

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, the most senior member of staff 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.

Staff and volunteers will have access to a trained DSL (or deputy) on each day staff and children are on site and will be made aware of who that person is and how to speak to if they are not on site.

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy, this includes making a report via CPOMS, which can be done remotely. In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS from home, they should telephone the Designated safeguarding Lead and / or send an email to ensure that the concern has been received. Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay and follow normal procedures.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concern to the headteacher. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the headteacher.

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

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

Safeguarding Training and induction

All DSLs have taken part in refresher training, provided by the local authority, remotely during the pandemic.

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 Portway Junior School (such as students on teaching placements), they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction. There are no volunteers or non-essential visitors permitted to the school during the pandemic.

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*

Prior to 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, Portway Junior 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 (2019) (KCSIE).

Concerns about a staff member/volunteer

The school does not use supply teachers and, for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic, all visitors to the school are prohibited. School staff and essential visitors such as peripatetic staff (who are still working), social workers, therapists and police officers are the only visitors allowed in school.

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – whether those concerns are about staff/volunteers working on site or remotely.

We will continue to refer adults who have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

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.

In the unlikely scenario that Portway Junior School would need to utilise 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.

Portway Junior 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.

Portway Junior 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, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, Portway Junior School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

Online safety in schools

Portway Junior School will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system.

Where pupils are using computers/laptops/tablets/chromebooks in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

Children and online safety away from school

Where education has to take place remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important that schools, teachers and pupils maintain professional practice as much as possible. When communicating online with parents and pupils, schools should:

- Communicate within school hours as much as possible (or hours agreed by the school to suit the needs of staff)
- Communicate through the school channels approved by the senior leadership team
- Use school devices over personal devices wherever possible.
- Use school email accounts (not personal ones) to interact with families.
- Emails and communications should be professional and refer only to learning, ensuring that personal information is not shared.
- When emailing multiple people, staff should take care to not share contact details with others.
- Staff should not reply to emails from parents over the holidays, during the weekend or outside of normal working hours.
- Any provision of one-to-one sessions remotely for pupils with SEN or pastoral needs should be discussed and agreed with the senior leadership team in order to assess any risks. Including a parent or additional staff member in the call may be appropriate.
- All staff will avoid sharing personal information, remembering that a professional relationship is still needed after this crisis.
- Emails concerning parenting issues should be forwarded to one of the Inclusion Team via the SENDCO and/or Inclusion Manager
- Safeguarding concerns should be forwarded to the DSLs immediately and staff should follow up with a phone call to DSLs if they are worried.
- Any emails that are concerning, should be forwarded to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher and further communication stopped until the emails have been reviewed.
- All staff will adhere to the school code of conduct and 'Acceptable Internet Use' policy.

Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately, reporting concerns to a DSL and recording these in CPOMS.

We will make sure children know how to report any concerns they have back to our school and signpost them to other sources of support too.

School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements and any emails sent to parents at this time, comply with the 'Guidance for New Class Emails' guidance agreed for use during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual sessions, especially where webcams are involved:

- No 1:1s, groups only
- 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; and the background should be blurred.
- The live session should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Live sessions should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff should record the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.
- GoogleMeets (our vehicle for live sessions) can start without a member of staff present. Staff *must* be prompt to online GoogleMeets that are set so that pupils joining are always supervised. Staff *must* also be the last to leave a GoogleMeet so that the meeting is properly closed and not able to continue without an adult present.

Supporting children not in school and contact plans

Portway Junior 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 contact plan is in place for that child or young person.

Portway Junior School and its DSLs and Inclusion Team will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan.

Contact plans are in place for children with a social worker, and other children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where the child is at home. The Inclusion Team manage a Googlesheet to which all school staff have access and which details the member of staff allocated to maintain contact with each vulnerable child and their family.

This sets out:

- A designated member of staff, who knows the family well, will phone or email at least weekly.
- Designated staff will make contact with the child and their family usually by telephone or email following the usual safeguarding procedures. Contact may sometimes also be in person, e.g. a doorstep visit.
- Any attempts at contact will be recorded in CPOMS and on the Google sheet
- We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them regularly dependent on individual circumstances.

If we can't make contact, we will visit in person and alert any relevant services as needed.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

Portway Junior 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. Teachers at Portway Junior School need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Portway Junior 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. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded on CPOMS.

Supporting children in school

Portway Junior School

- Is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

Supporting children as they return to school after the January/February national lockdown

Staff and volunteers will be aware of the possible effects that this period may have had on pupils' mental health. They will look out for behavioural signs, including pupils being fearful, withdrawn, aggressive, oppositional or excessively clingy, to help identify where support may be needed.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Portway Junior School recognises that during the closure and the recovery of school 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.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy addendum will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and Department for Education is updated. At every review it will be approved by the governing body.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy