**Addendum – April 2020**



**COVID-19**

**Safeguarding and Child Protection Arrangements**

**Rainhill Nursery School**

# Context

From 20th March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible. Schools are to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response or for any children deemed to be vulnerable.

Schools 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 Rainhill Nursery School’s Safeguarding and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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**Key contacts**

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| --- | --- |
| **EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER** | Suzanne Payne |
| **DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD** | Emma Nicholson |
| **DEPUTY SAFEGUARDING LEADS** | Helena Irons  Jen Teasdale |
| **DESIGNATED TEACHER LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN & SENCO** | Emma Nicholson |
| **NOMINATED SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR** | Ty Armario |
| **CHAIR OF GOVERNORS** | Ty Armario |

# 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. It can also include children who are open to an Early Help Assessment.

Those with an EHC plan should be risk-assessed in order 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.

Rainhill Nursery School will continue to work with and support external agencies to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children’s social workers and the Headteacher of the Virtual School, 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 Rainhill Nursery School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent or carer.

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

Rainhill Nursery 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 on non-attendance.

If Rainhill Nursery School has any children in attendance (e.g. because they are vulnerable or their parent(s) / carers are critical workers) we will submit the daily attendance sheet to the DfE by 12 noon - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings>

Rainhill Nursery School and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – Rainhill Nursery School will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. Rainhill Nursery School 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. The Local Authority will then contact schools on a weekly basis to gain any accounts of vulnerable young people who have not attended school that week. This is to further ensure the safety and wellbeing of that child or young person.

To support the above, Rainhill Nursery 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, Rainhill Nursery School will notify their social worker.

# Designated Safeguarding Lead

Rainhill Nursery School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Emma Nicholson

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Jen Teasdale and Helena Irons

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, a senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

This might include updating records 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 Rainhill Nursery School staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day, the staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to contact them.

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 Safeguarding Policy.

Where a member of staff has a concern about a child, they should contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy DSL or Headteacher. This will ensure that the concern is received and should be followed up immediately with a written account.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Any concerns or allegations around staff should be reported to the Headteacher.

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

# Safeguarding Training and induction

DSL training is very unlikely to take place 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 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 Rainhill Nursery School, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction. These members of staff should have the appropriate safer recruitment checks and procedures to ensure they are safe to work with children.

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, any new or additional staff should 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, Rainhill Nursery 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).

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.

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

Where Rainhill Nursery School are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of Keeping Children Safe In Education 2019. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Rainhill Nursery 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.

Rainhill Nursery 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](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, Rainhill Nursery 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 and colleges

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

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

# 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 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 school’s Code of Conduct.

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

Below are some things to consider 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.
* Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred.
* The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
* Live classes 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 must only use platforms specified by senior leaders
* Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

# Supporting children not in school

Rainhill Nursery 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. A record of contacts made should be recorded on the individual child’s file.

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

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

This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

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

Rainhill Nursery 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 Rainhill Nursery School need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils’ work when they are at home.

# Supporting children in school

Rainhill Nursery School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

Rainhill Nursery 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.

Rainhill Nursery 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.

Rainhill Nursery 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 the individual child’s safeguarding file.

Where Rainhill Nursery School has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – they will be discussed immediately between the Headteacher, Chair of Governors and Local Authority.

In the event that the school clusters with another neighbouring school, it will be important for the DSL to communicate with any other DSL. We recognise that these members of staff have the best insight into their own vulnerable children and form a vital part of child protection arrangements. Therefore it is imperative that clustering schools work closely and those DSLs communicate effectively with one another.

# Types of abuse

The recognition, understanding and response to different forms of abuse remain the same as that set out in the main body of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

# Supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children, their families and staff

During this difficult and unpredictable time, it is inevitable that the situation may have an adverse effect on people. This is especially true for vulnerable pupils or for those children whose parents have to continue to work. Therefore, the school will work hard to support the mental health and wellbeing of its pupils and their families.

The Local Authority will send out resources that can be shared and referrals to external agencies will continue where appropriate. If any family feel they may need additional support, please do not hesitate to contact the DSL.

This is also a difficult period for school staff, who are having to work harder than ever in order to support our pupils and families. Our staff are also critical workers, and so Rainhill Nursery School recognises the need to support the wellbeing of our staff too.