



COVID-19 school closure arrangements for  
Safeguarding and Child Protection at  
Avondale Primary School

This information is in addition to our School  
Safeguarding Policy

**School Name: Avondale Primary School**

**Policy owner:** Vicky Brown

**Date:** 4-1-21

**Date shared with staff:** 11-01-21

## **1. Context**

From 4<sup>th</sup> January 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 Avondale Primary School Safeguarding, and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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## Key contacts

Role	Name	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mrs V Brown	<a href="mailto:Vicky.brown@avondale.blackburn.sch.uk">Vicky.brown@avondale.blackburn.sch.uk</a>
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	Mrs S Duckett	<a href="mailto:Stacey.duckett@avondale.blackburn.sch.uk">Stacey.duckett@avondale.blackburn.sch.uk</a>
Chair of Governors	Iain Schofield	<a href="mailto:Iain.schofield@avondale.blackburn.sch.uk">Iain.schofield@avondale.blackburn.sch.uk</a>

## 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 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.

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

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies) 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.

Avondale 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. The lead person for this will be: Sarah Stowe and Charlotte Hesketh from the authority. Though at this stage we do not have any children who are in local authority care.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, in discussion with their social worker and in dialogue with parents, 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 Avondale Primary School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

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

Avondale Primary 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.

Avondale Primary School and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school. Avondale Primary School's staff on duty in school will then follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the children subsequently do not attend.

### **How will this look in school?**

Parents have been asked to book their children into school on the days that they require childcare. The office staff will prepare year groups registers based on the bookings that have been made. Any children who do not attend who have booked a place will be chased up using the usual school procedures. A weekly report for children who have a social worker will be sent to individual social workers conforming the child's attendance at school during the week. If any vulnerable child needs to self-isolate, then this information will be shared with the allocated Social Worker. Families will then be called in line with our school procedures.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead**

Avondale Primary School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and three Deputy DSLs.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Vicky Brown

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Debbie Wright, Stacey Duckett and Karen Morgan

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. In Avondale Primary School, to reduce staff on site, there will be trained DSL on call each week, this can be seen in the rota.

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 Avondale Primary School staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to speak to them. This can be seen on the staff rota sent via email.

The DSL and Deputy 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, this includes making a report via CPOMS, which can be done remotely. This could be a concern with regard to children we have in school and for children not presently in school it could be from any intelligence gleaned via the blogs, phone calls or from emails.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS from home, they should email a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Headteacher. 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 in the school, they should report the concern to the safeguarding lead on duty. 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: Iain Schofield.

## **Safeguarding Training and induction**

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 (2020). 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 (though as a school we have no plans to recruit during this time), or new volunteers enter Avondale Primary School, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

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 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 (there are no plans to do this at present), Avondale Primary 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.

Avondale Primary School will not be utilising volunteers during this period.

Avondale 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.

Avondale 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.

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. Staff and visitors entering the school building should sign in as they would under a normal school opening. As such, Avondale Primary School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in KCSIE.

### **Online safety in schools and colleges**

Avondale Primary School will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system for the children who are working in school accessing the online learning as set by their teachers.

Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place in line with our online safety and safeguarding policy.

### **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 Avondale Primary School's code of conduct.

Avondale Primary 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/skype/ Facetime are involved:

- No 1:1 situations.
- 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 (two weeks teaching time on the blog and 6 months on the school network), 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.

### **Supporting children not in school**

Avondale Primary 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.

Details of this plan must be recorded on CPOMS, as should a record of contact have made.

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

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

A vulnerable safeguarding list has been devised through liaising with class teachers and then HT, PWB and SENDCo met to discuss the list. All children have been reviewed and the necessary children put into a list. A school register for children who are in school will be populated by the office and shared with school based staff. Red children to receive a daily phone call from Avondale's pupil well team, and information to be inputted into the weekly tracker. Amber children to be rung twice weekly by SENDCo or our pupil well-being team and information will be recorded on the tracker. Green children are to be rung once weekly by class based support staff. and information put into CPOMS. Class teachers to keep a log of which children are utilising the online learning and/or have emailed the year group email address. Class teachers to make phone contact to any children who has not accessed the online learning been in touch via email throughout the week. If no further contact is made then to inform Mrs Duckett the Assistant Headteacher who will continue to try to engage contact with families.

Email contact to parents (not children) must only be via the year group emails, set up for this very purpose, these are shared emails between the year groups and therefore are transparent for other colleagues to see. At the end of this outbreak these email accounts will be deleted. Please see guidance on conduct via email.



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.

Avondale Primary 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 Avondale Primary School need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Avondale Primary 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**

Avondale Primary School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

Avondale Primary 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.

Avondale Primary 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.

Avondale Primary 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.

Where Avondale Primary School has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – will discuss them immediately with the Headteacher or Assistant Heads

### **Peer on Peer Abuse**

Avondale Primary 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 multiagency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person.

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