



# Chestnuts Primary School

'Encourage, Enable, Empower'

## COVID-19 School Closure Arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Chestnuts



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**Chair of Governing Board:**

Name: Wayne Scott  
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**Designated governor for safeguarding:**

Name: Clare Adams  
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**Designated governor for safer recruitment:**

Name: Wayne Scott  
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## 1. CONTEXT

From 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020, 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 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 Chestnuts Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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## 2. 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 with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

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

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.

Chestnuts 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 virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children. The lead people for this will be: Mrs Sear, Mrs Tearle and Mrs Wilkes.

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 Chestnuts will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID-19, Chestnuts or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Chestnuts will encourage our vulnerable children to attend school.



### **3. 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.

Chestnuts and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – Chestnuts will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. Chestnuts will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) who subsequently do not attend.

To support this, Chestnuts will, when communicating with parents/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, Chestnuts will notify their social worker.

### **4. DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD**

Chestnuts has Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and Deputy DSLs.

Designated Safeguarding Leads: Mrs Sear and Mrs Tearle

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads: Karen Wilkes and Miss Skillings

Other members of the safeguarding team: Katie Robins and Lauren Seagrave

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case, another member of the safeguarding team will be onsite with a trained DSL (or deputy) available for contact via phone – 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 and managing access to child protection online through Behaviour Watch 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 school.

It is important that all Chestnuts 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. Staff must also continue to fill out child protection forms on Behaviour Watch.

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



## 5. REPORTING A CONCERN

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in Chestnuts Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, this includes making a report via Behaviour Watch, which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access Behaviour Watch from home, they should email the 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 complete a whistleblowing form and alert the Headteacher immediately. If there is a requirement to notify 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: Wayne Scott

The Multi-Academy Trust will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

## 6. SAFEGUARDING TRAINING AND INDUCTION

DSL training is very 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 Chestnuts, 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



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- There is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

For movement within the Trust, schools should seek assurance from the Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) HR Manager that the member of staff has received appropriate safeguarding training.

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.



## **7. SAFER RECRUITMENT/VOLUNTEERS AND MOVEMENT OF STAFF**

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable and are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. When recruiting new staff, Chestnuts 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.

Where Chestnuts 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.

Chestnuts 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.

Chestnuts will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teacher 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.Teachers@education.gov.uk](mailto:Misconduct.Teachers@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/volunteer will be in the school, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, Chestnuts will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraph 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

## **8. ONLINE SAFETY IN SCHOOL**

Chestnuts 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.





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## 9. CHILDREN AND ONLINE SAFETY AWAY FROM SCHOOL

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.

Chestnuts will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements. Google Classroom will form the main learning platform with a code of conduct issued.

If virtual lessons were to be used, below are some things to consider, 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 provided by Chestnuts to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held
- Parents are to contact teaching staff directly through the main school office (telephone/email) and not through the email icon available on Google Classroom or to their personal school email account.
- Email: [office@chestnuts.milton-keynes.sch.co.uk](mailto:office@chestnuts.milton-keynes.sch.co.uk)

## 10. SUPPORTING CHILDREN NOT IN SCHOOL

Chestnuts is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, receive social care support, be on the SEN register or a child who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, Chestnuts will make weekly contact via phone. A record of contact made will be kept. In the event that a concern is raised, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be followed and a Child Protection form completed through Behaviour Watch.



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Weekly contact with all children by any staff member will be logged to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all pupils. If no contact is had, the child will be flagged up and a phone call home will be made. Further communication methods will be used in necessary.

Chestnuts and its DSLs will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication.

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.

Chestnuts recognises that school is a protective factor for children and the current circumstances can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Teachers at Chestnuts need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home, therefore on Google Classrooms, the following weekly guidance must be adhered to:

#### EYFS

5 maths activities

5 phonics activities

1 document with ideas of practical things that can be done at home

1 reading activity for parents/carers to read the text and ask given questions to their child

#### KEY STAGE 1

5 maths activities

5 English activities

5 Phonics activities or 5 reading comprehension activities

#### KEY STAGE 2

5 maths activities

5 English activities

5 reading comprehension activities

1 topic activity

Chestnuts 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.



## **11. SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN SCHOOL**

Chestnuts is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

Chestnuts 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.

Chestnuts 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 COVID-19. If a child in school develops symptoms as outlined by the Government, then a phone call will be made for collection.

Chestnuts 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.

Where Chestnuts has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – the Headteacher will discuss them immediately with the trust.

## **12. PEER ON PEER ABUSE**

Chestnuts 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 the Child Protection Policy.

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

Concerns and actions must be recorded on Behaviour Watch and appropriate referrals made.

## **13. SUPPORTING STAFF**

Chestnuts is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its staff.

Chestnuts 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 COVID-19.

The Headteacher will make contact with all staff weekly via phone and/or email to discuss wellbeing and ability to work. Vulnerable staff members will be advised to self-isolate until Government guidelines change and no staff member will be forced to work. Mental health and wellbeing resources will be emailed out to all staff and a skeletal team of staff will be deployed in order to minimise the spread of COVID-19.



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## **Child Protection – Addendum**

### **Introduction**

Chestnuts Primary School believes that all children, staff, parents, carers and visitors have the right to feel safe as well as be safe. To achieve this, we all have a role in teaching the children in our care to be good citizens, to make good choices, to behave appropriately and to have respect for others and the environment in which we live and work. This has never been more paramount as it is in our current climate.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this addendum is to explain the changes in our procedures and practice as a result of Government guidance in relation to Covid-19.

### **Aim**

Our work is to safeguard pupils, staff, parents, carers and visitor alike by setting out clear revised school procedures and practice. We aim to encourage children to make positive choices in keeping themselves and others safe as well as clearly communicating changes for staff, parents, carers and visitors too.

### **Changes to Procedures and Practice**

Ensure all staff are informed of the DSL(s) and how to contact them each day.  
Risk Assessments for covid-19 are up to date and accessible including Health and Safety.  
Mental Health will have been impacted on and the measures in place to support those involved including, staff, carers, parents and children. See mental health and wellbeing policy.  
Chestnuts will do everything it 'reasonably' can to ensure all children at home stay safe online. See online safety policy.

21.05.2020