



To All Kent Schools

**Children, Young People and
Education Directorate**

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Dear Colleagues,

Following the last night's government announcement on the closure of schools except for the children of key workers and vulnerable children, we appreciate and are very grateful for the fact that many of you are already planning for your school or group of schools to respond to this development.

However, we must apologise as we were promised a government announcement of the list of who would fall into the category of "key worker" by 13.00 today. This has still not come through. Rather than keep you waiting we have decided to send out the letter and will send the Key Worker list to follow as soon as the information has been provided.

We are aware that some of you are already working with colleagues to plan for how you meet the needs for children in your localities both now and going forward and we are also talking to colleague Headteachers from KAH in order to pick up issues being raised by schools and to coordinate message and information going back to schools.

We know that planning for this is challenging and that you are dealing with a combination of overload of information and missing information and therefore this letter is designed to set out clearly what the government expectations are and what the Local Authority is doing to work with you to help meet those expectations and deal with issues and unanswered questions as they arise.

Stage 1: Now until start of official Easter Holiday

Government expectation is that all schools will be open for their own pupils whose parents/carers are key workers. Family circumstances will differ, but where even one family member is a key worker, the family should be asked whether would want their child to attend school.

The expectation also includes being open for vulnerable children. The definition here is children who are CiC, CHiN or have a CP Plan and those with EHCPs. You will need to liaise with the social workers working with those families to identify those most in need and ensure support to enable those children to attend school. Not all parents of children with EHCPs will want to take up the offer of a school place but they should be offered the opportunity.

A suggested parental questionnaire is attached to this letter as appendix 1, for those of you who have not already made contact with parents to gauge the likely demand.

Stage 2: Easter Holidays

We would like to identify those schools that would be willing and have the capacity to either be a hub school or offer help to a hub school to provide holiday club activities over the Easter period to children in the key worker and vulnerable categories. Integrated Children's Services would also be working with these schools to offer Early Help workers e.g. Youth workers or other suitable staff (depending on availability and demand) to support the activities over this period. Some of you may already have holiday activities planned, working with local voluntary bodies or your district councils.

Stage 3: Start of Term 5 and ongoing

As the situation develops, it is inevitable that schools will find it increasingly difficult to provide the staff to open their own school for the target groups of children, or where the numbers of children make opening for a small group unsustainable. Hubs will therefore need to serve a wider population of children, providing supervision and support to children following education programmes set by their own schools (more information on what would be looked for from a hub school is detailed below).

We would like to hear from schools who are willing and able to offer to become Hub Schools to meet the longer- term needs of children over this challenging period.

- In any hub, all pupil attendees would need to be agreed/signed off between the parent/carer and the respective headteacher.
- Ideally, the hubs would be at locations with plenty of ICT hardware available for children to work at and with strong internet/ wifi connections to enable the children to follow the programmes of education set by their own schools under supervision.
- These 'hubs' would be staffed by available and willing staff from all schools in the district. The intention would be that these staff would sign up on a central register, supported by their headteacher and have confirmation of their enhanced DBS check. We are looking at the possibility of Early Help workers (e.g Youth Workers) also being able to sign up to help schools fulfil their role in supporting children in target groups.
- There would be a designated senior leader/'hub' leader and trained DSL in attendance each day.

- All staff will be from schools or will be Local Government front line children's services staff and will have an enhanced DBS in place.

Pupils could be asked to bring packed lunches; consideration will need to be given to how we provide for children in these target groups who are also eligible for FSM. We have just received guidance from Government around FSM support

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance>

- We are also talking to catering providers, some of whom are laying off staff, as they will be required both now and when schools re-open.
- Attendance lists would be populated in advance and attendees communicated to respective schools.
- The 'hub' school would provide supervised areas for children to complete remote working provided by their respective schools and maybe some activities for children as well. They may also be venues for community -based holiday club provision over usual school holiday periods, should this situation continue.
- Each school involved with the hub would be able to use the hub school as a 'base of operations' for whatever actions they wished to put in place in relation to this group of pupils. For example:
 - Daily phone call to check on welfare.
 - A safe place to come if needed.
 - A location for meetings if needed.
 - A contact point for other agencies working with the child/family.
- Confidentiality and record-keeping would need to be considered carefully and would remain the responsibility of the school the child/young person usually attends.

Our intention would be to create a minimum primary and secondary 'offer' in each district.

It is recognised that these arrangements would be very unusual and that this is certainly not something we would ordinarily do. However, these are extraordinary times and we may need to be prepared to compromise some of our normal approaches in the interests of helping maintain key worker attendance and support for vulnerable children and families. Naturally, these compromises would not extend to matters of safeguarding. A safeguarding toolkit is shown in appendix 2 of this letter to help schools manage safeguarding over this challenging period.

We are also aware that there are practical considerations to be dealt with e.g. insurance, transport etc and will be working to provide some clarity on these points as we are in discussions with our transport providers. Schools considering being Hub schools who purchase their own insurance, may want to check with their insurance providers.

We need to ascertain in fairly short order whether this is something there is an appetite for. To that end, we would be very grateful if you could complete the short questionnaire, we have produced using the link below.

Link to questionnaire: www.kent.gov.uk/schoolscovid19form

Thank you one again for you continued support.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matt Dunkley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the letter 'y'.

Matt Dunkley CBE
Corporate Director
Children, Young People and Education

Appendix 1

Suggested Questions to parents to collate Key Worker information:

As per current guidance from Government, the list of jobs which fall under the category of Key Worker are as follows:

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

- 1) Does at least one member of your household with carer responsibility for a child at xxxxxxxx school hold a position that is deemed "key worker"?

Yes / No

- 2) Currently, do your family circumstances allow for your child to be appropriately cared for at home while the school is not fully operational due to the COVID-19 outbreak?

Yes / No

- 3) Do you feel it is likely that these circumstances may change in the future?

Yes / No

If yes, please provide an explanation of the circumstances that may result in your child either requiring access to school provision or no longer requiring school provision?

- 4) Does you child(ren) have siblings in other schools?

Yes / No

If yes, which schools?

5) If your child would need to attend school, would you also look to access holiday clubs during the official school holidays?

Yes / No

6) Does your child have an EHCP?

Yes / No

If yes, would you wish them to still attend school?

Yes / No

**THE EDUCATION
PEOPLE**



COVID 19 Safeguarding Toolkit for Education Settings

Education Safeguarding Service

March 2020 – Version 1

Name of school	
Name of Headteacher/Principal	
Name of Designated Safeguarding Lead	
Name of Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	
Name of Designated Governor for Safeguarding	
Date completed (DD MM YY)	

Are there updated procedures in place within your school in light of COVID19?

This nine-page document has been written in response to the recent government announcement on UK Schools and Early Years Settings to restrict access to their settings for most pupils and staff, other than those children of key workers and vulnerable children. It will assist Governing Bodies and Headteachers in reviewing arrangements for carrying out their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in light of the COVID 19 Virus.

This guidance has been developed from a range of resources. It does not replace practice guidance from the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Partnership or Public Health England <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response> and should be used alongside the appropriate Kent & Medway Safeguarding Children Procedures (online) <https://www.proceduresonline.com/kentandmedway> and the Support Level Guidance regarding thresholds for referrals into Children's Social Care (Integrated Children's Services) https://www.kscb.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/80373/SLG-sheet-v13.pdf

Schools must be aware that this tool should be subject to frequent review as new information and guidance comes to light.

****Please be advised that since the government announcement, there has been an increase in social media posts from teachers, or people possibly posing to be teachers, offering to support families in a variety of ways. Including teaching and offering online tutoring or providing on-line support. This obviously is not regulated and open to risk when families are at their most vulnerable and in isolation. Please ensure staff, parents and carers are mindful of this and seek appropriate advice when making alternative arrangements.****

The DSLs should Consider:

- Current guidance from Public Health England and how this might impact on vulnerable pupils and their families. Be prepared to respond swiftly to changes in local and/or government guidance.
- Contact your Area Education Officer if unsure about how to interpret the guidance or apply it to your setting.

- Liaise with your school safeguarding team, either virtually or in person, to identify and consider the individual needs of vulnerable children and the children of key workers.
- Consider how the school plans to continue to support pupils, including those who are already self-isolating?
- How to ensure multi-agency colleagues are updated when children on multi-agency plans, including CP and CIN, are self-isolating.
- Multi-agency colleagues, including Social work and Early Help teams, are fully updated to enable them to consider whether further plans need to be put into place.
- There is a Designated Safeguarding Lead contactable at all times during the school day and that contact details are well publicised so that parents or professionals can contact the DSL in the event of an emergency, such as a S.47 enquiry.
- There is a clear answerphone message for when the DSL phone is not in use (eg out of hours) directing the caller to Front Door or Police with any immediate safeguarding concerns.
- Continue to consult with appropriate agencies if unsure about the needs of individual children or families.
- Ensure that multiagency meetings, such as Child Protection Conferences, continue to be attended, either in person or by skype, in addition to sending in a report.
- If work is being sent home, provide guidance to parents on additional safeguarding and Online Safety considerations.

Careful consideration is needed when assessing the needs of children and their families. Crisis intervention means that the focus needs to be on providing emergency support services rather than monitoring services. Ensure that families are encouraged to consider what supports they can draw on within their own support networks in the first instance. Although, be mindful that there may be an increase in vulnerability as a result of the current situation.

If in doubt about whether a Request for Support (Level 3 or 4) is necessary, please consult:

The Education Safeguarding Service on 03000 418503 OR the Front Door on 03000 411111 or Out of Hours 03000 419191 (**Front Door cannot give advice on Covid19.**)

The Education Safeguarding Service will continue to function as normal and will be available to provide advice and guidance Monday – Friday between the hours 09:00 – 17:00.

Vulnerable Children:	
Questions?	Considerations:

<p>How many pupils in the school are considered to be vulnerable?</p> <p>Create a traffic light system to support you in identifying the most vulnerable children and consider individual needs on a case by case basis.</p> <p>Consider the needs of pupils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - on multi-agency plans such as: CIN/CP plans - who have additional needs including mental health - who have vulnerable parents or carers over the age of 70 and/or with physical or mental health issues - who are witnessing domestic abuse - Low income families <p>School closure / Self Isolation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does this highlight any additional or increased risk for this child? - If so what are the risk and what measures need to be put in place to mitigate those risks? - Is there a need for any additional support, i.e. a regular contact with school staff by telephone or skype. - How will the school manage any Operation Encompass notifications? <p>Is there an increased risk to any child in terms of online safety?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do parents have an understanding of how to keep their children safe online? • Do parents/carers know who to contact if they are concerned about something which happens online at home? • Is there a Policy relating to the safe use of mobile phones, cameras and other internet enable devices/technology? 	<p>Do I have the most up to date information provided by KCC?</p> <p>The most up to date information will be available via the COVID 19 page on Kelsi.</p> <p>Do high risk vulnerable students need an individual risk assessment and safety plan to outline how school will continue to support these most vulnerable students?</p> <p>Agree who will do this and by when.</p> <p>Are all of the current professionals aware of the risks/ current situation?</p> <p>If not, agree who will do this and by when.</p> <p>Are there any upcoming Child Protection Conferences or Child in Need Meetings?</p> <p>If so, who is attending? If no one is attending, contact the social worker, explore what are the alternatives, can you attend by skype or send a report?</p> <p>If no current professional involvement, does any other agency or professional need to be aware of the current situation? If so who?</p> <p>Agree who will do this and by when.</p> <p>Do vulnerable children and their families know who to contact if issues arise?</p> <p>Agree who will do this and by when.</p>
<p>Distance Learning:</p>	

Questions?	Considerations:
<p>What mechanisms are in place regarding home learning activities?</p> <p>Home learning materials for families during coronavirus (COVID-19) self-isolation period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How are you going to continue supporting your pupils? - Are teachers planning to use webinars/remote learning? If so: - What provisions for pupils who do not have access to technology? - Does the school have AUP/CP/Online Safety Policy available via their website and to send if necessary. Has this been revisited with staff, parents/carers and pupils. Do they know the expectations regarding safe use, eg: using appropriate language, clothing, location, group provision only. - If the school is providing internet access for pupils (eg: via dongle or VPN network) schools should ensure access is managed in line with schools appropriate filtering and monitoring decisions. - Ensure any materials including live streaming are recorded and backed up for further review if required at a later date. - Is there adequate adult supervision in place for pupils working from home. <p>The Southwest Grid for Learning have provided useful suggestions for safer remote learning: Swgfl.org.uk/saferemotelearning</p>	<p>Do you have a risk assessment for home working / online learning? internet provision off-site?</p> <p>What service platform will be used?</p> <p>Have terms and conditions/privacy statements been considered?</p> <p>Don't use personal accounts – staff need school approved accounts when contacting pupils.</p> <p>Is the location pupils and staff are using considered to be appropriate and safe.</p> <p>Kent Schools can seek advice can be sought from the Online Safety Advisor if unsure.</p> <p>Data Protection / GDPR –</p> <p>Are staff up to date with GDPR requirements and school policy expectations of their behaviour online. Advice should be sought from the schools DPO or have you sought guidance from Information Commissioners Office</p> <p>Do you have useful safeguarding guidance available to parents on your website?</p> <p>Agree who will be responsible for updating information on the school website and ensuring information is distributed to parents appropriately.</p>

Can the school support parents to ensure that they have appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place?

Agree who will take responsibility for this and by when

Schools may need to provide additional advice and guidance for pupils on online safety. A range of resources will be available on the Education People Blog:

www.theeducationpeople.org/blog/?tags=letter&page=1

Agree who will do this and when.

School closure or partial closure:		
Questions?	Queries:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Are there arrangements in place for vulnerable children and children of key workers? ○ Is a DSL to be available at all times during school hours? ○ Are emergency contact numbers available to the local authority for use in cases of emergency by Integrated Children’s Services and the Police? ○ Are parents aware of emergency contact numbers for the school and key safeguarding agencies such as ICS and the Police? ○ Do you have guidance on safeguarding available to parents on your website? ○ Does the school safeguarding information clearly identify who the Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) are and how to contact them? ○ Is there adequate supervision in place if parents are working from home? ○ If boarding students are remaining in your care, have you considered Statutory Private Fostering requirements? 		<p>Do you have a rota system and contact details to ensure the DSL can be contacted in an emergency?</p> <p>Agree who is responsible for ensuring ESS / Area Education Officers have up to date emergency contact details?</p> <p>Is there a contact number/email address available on school website.</p> <p>Ensure there is a deputy available to step in if required</p>

Date last updated:

By whom:

Seen and approved by governor:

DSL (signature)

Date:

Governor (signature)

Date: