

Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

The Japanese School London



Approved by:	The Governing Board	Date: May 2020
Last reviewed on:	May 2020	
Next review due by:	Sep 2020	

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Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Mr Katsumi Nishihara	nishihara-k@thejapaneseschool.ltd.uk Direct: 020-8896-4660
Deputy DSL	Ms Akiko Sekine	sekine-a@thejapaneseschool.ltd.uk 020-8993-7145 Ext. 221
Designated member of senior leadership team if DSL (and deputy) can't be on site	Mr Hideki Ishiyama	Ishiyama-h@thejapaneseschool.ltd.uk 020-8993-7145 Ext. 201
Headteacher	Mr Hideki Ishiyama	Ishiyama-h@thejapaneseschool.ltd.uk 020-8993-7145 Ext. 201
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Mr Paul Andrews	07562 435356 Email: AndrewP@ealing.gov.uk
Chair of governors	Mr Shiko Yanagisawa	Shiko.yanagisawa@uk.daiwacm.com 020 7597 8001

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from our 3 local safeguarding partners, the local authority (LA), a clinical commissioning group for an area within the LA and the chief officer of police for a police area in the LA area, and local authority (LA) Ealing Council.

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance [Coronavirus: safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers](#), and should be read in conjunction with that policy.

Unless covered here, our normal child protection policy continues to apply.

The Department for Education's (DfE's) definition of 'vulnerable children' includes those who:

- Have a social worker, including children:
 - With a child protection plan
 - Assessed as being in need
 - Looked after by the local authority
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

2. Core safeguarding principles

We will still have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

Although we are operating in a different way to normal, we are still following these important safeguarding principles:

- The best interests of children must come first
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should continue to 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

3. Reporting concerns

All staff and volunteers must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this, both for children still attending school and those at home.

As a reminder, all staff should continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements

We aim to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site wherever possible. Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

If our DSL (or deputy) can't be in school, they can be contacted remotely by email: nishihara-k@thejapaneseschool.ltd.uk or sekine-a@thejapaneseschool.ltd.uk.

We will keep all school staff and volunteers informed by email/SMS as to who will be the DSL (or deputy) on any given day, and how to contact them.

We will ensure that DSLs (and deputies), wherever their location, know who the most vulnerable children in our school are.

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding. This will be the head of academic department. You can contact them by: ron-nichi@thejapaneseschool.ltd.uk.

The senior leader will be responsible for liaising with the off-site DSL (or deputy) to make sure they (the senior leader) can:

- Identify the most vulnerable children in school

- › Update and manage access to child protection files, where necessary
- › Liaise with children's social workers where they need access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments

5. Working with other agencies

We will continue to work with children's social care, and with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

- › Our 3 local safeguarding partners
- › The local authority about children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need

The following guidance is currently in place:

See APPENDICES

6. Monitoring attendance

As most children will not be attending school during this period of school closure, we will not be completing our usual attendance registers or following our usual procedures to follow up on non-attendance.

The exception to this is where any child we expect to attend school during the closure doesn't attend, or stops attending. In these cases we will:

- › Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, by mail or weekly morning meeting.
- › Notify their social worker, where they have one

We are using the Department for Education's daily online attendance form to keep an accurate record of who is attending school.

We will make arrangements with parents and carers to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details, and additional contact details where possible. We distribute the any change of emergency contact by distributing a letter or sending emergency SMS message if necessary.

7. Peer-on-peer abuse

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education when managing reports and supporting victims of peer-on-peer abuse.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – about both children attending school and those at home.

8. Concerns about a staff member or volunteer

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).

We will continue to refer potential cases of teacher misconduct to the Teaching Regulation Agency. We will do this using the email address Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

9. Support for children who aren't 'vulnerable' but where we have concerns

We have the option to offer places in school to children who don't meet the Department for Education's definition of 'vulnerable', but who we have safeguarding concerns about. We will work with parents/carers to do this.

If these children will not be attending school, we will put a contact plan in place, as explained in section 10 below.

10. Contact plans

We have contact plans for children with a social worker and children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where:

- › They won't be attending school (for example where the school, parent/carer and social worker, if relevant, have decided together that this wouldn't be in the child's best interests); or
- › They would usually attend but have to self-isolate

Each child has an individual plan which sets out:

- › How often the school will make contact – this will be at least once a week
- › Which staff member(s) will make contact – as far as possible, this will be staff who know the family well
- › How staff will make contact – this will be over the phone, doorstep visits, or a combination of both

See [our article](#) for help with creating contact plans.

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them once a month.

If we can't make contact, we will contact children's social care or the police.

11. Safeguarding all children

Staff and volunteers are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children at greater risk.

Staff and volunteers will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on pupils' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately in line with the procedures set out in section 3 above.

For children at home, they will look out for signs like:

- › Not completing assigned work or logging on to school systems
- › No contact from children or families
- › Seeming more withdrawn during any class check-ins or video calls

Children are likely to be spending more time online during this period – see section 12 below for our approach to online safety both in and outside school.

See section 13 below for information on how we will support pupils' mental health.

12. Online safety

12.1 In school

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school.

12.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff behaviour policy/code of conduct.

Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in section 3 of this addendum.

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.

13.3 Working with parents and carers

We will make sure parents and carers:

- › Are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online
- › Know what our school is asking children to do online, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school

- Are aware that they should only use reputable online companies or tutors if they wish to supplement the remote teaching and resources our school provides
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

13. Mental health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. First class teacher or school nurse consult with pupils then recommend to seeing the medical advice at the Nippon Club Medical Clinic.

We will also signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time.

When setting expectations for pupils learning remotely and not attending school, teachers will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health.

14. Staff recruitment, training and induction

14.1 Recruiting new staff and volunteers

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that adults and volunteers who work in our school are safe to work with children.

We will continue to follow our safer recruitment procedures, and part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

In urgent cases, when validating proof of identity documents to apply for a DBS check, we will initially accept verification of scanned documents via online video link, rather than being in physical possession of the original documents. This approach is in line with revised guidance from the DBS.

New staff must still present the original documents when they first attend work at our school.

We will continue to do our usual checks on new volunteers, and do risk assessments to decide whether volunteers who aren't in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with paragraphs 167-172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

14.2 Staff 'on loan' from other schools

We will assess the risks of staff 'on loan' working in our school, and seek assurance from the 'loaning' school that staff have had the appropriate checks. Secretary of the school will be responsible for the assessments.

We will also use the DBS Update Service, where these staff have signed up to it, to check for any new information.

14.3 Safeguarding induction and training

We will make sure staff and volunteers are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements.

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive:

- A safeguarding induction
- A copy of our children protection policy (and this addendum)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1

We will decide on a case-by-case basis what level of safeguarding induction staff 'on loan' need. In most cases, this will be:

- A copy of our child protection policy and this addendum
- Confirmation of local processes
- Confirmation of DSL arrangements

14.4 Keeping records of who's on site

We will keep a record of which staff and volunteers are on site each day, and that appropriate checks have been carried out for them.

We will continue to keep our single central record up to date.

We will use the single central record to log:

- › Everyone working or volunteering in our school each day, including staff 'on loan'
- › Details of any risk assessments carried out on staff and volunteers on loan from elsewhere

15. Children attending other settings

Where children are temporarily required to attend another setting, we will make sure the receiving school is provided with any relevant welfare and child protection information.

Wherever possible, our DSL (or deputy) and/or special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) will share, as applicable:

- › The reason(s) why the child is considered vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them
- › The child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or personal education plan
- › Details of the child's social worker
- › Details of the virtual school head

Where the DSL, deputy or SENCO can't share this information, the senior leader(s) identified in section 4 will do this.

We will share this information before the child arrives as far as is possible, and otherwise as soon as possible afterwards.

16. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated, and as a minimum 4 weeks by Head Teacher and Secretary. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

17. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- › Child protection and safeguarding policy
- › Staff code of conduct
- › Health and safety policy
- › Bullying policy

APPENDIX 1

Important & Urgent Staff Circular for Children's Services 19 March 2020

Re: Business Continuity during COVID-19 /Coronavirus Pandemic

Colleagues

Following the latest advice from the government and the increasingly rigorous measures set out to delay the transmission of the disease, we have agreed plans to ensure that we can continue to provide essential services at this critical time.

These plans are intended to keep our staff healthy and safe whilst providing vital help, support and protection to children and families. This is in line with the National Guidance on social distancing and take into accounts those staff needing to work at home.

Our core and statutory work will continue but there will be changes to how this takes place given we will be operating with a reduced number of staff for a period.

We will be running a duty service based in Perceval House. This will consist of three 'duty' teams who will each work one week in three based at Perceval House. This means that all social work teams will be working on this rota basis. The duty worker will complete the work (to the end of the Child & Family Assessment) and then transfer the case, where appropriate to the regular MAST / Connect team.

All staff on the rota are members of staff confirmed as being able to be in work.

The team that is on duty will respond to referrals and provide a safeguarding service.

The two teams not based at Perceval House on duty will work from home carrying on their current caseloads. Those not involved in the duty teams will continue with their existing work but from home working to the following guidance.

Staff will be provided with further guidance and support from their line manager/Head of Service as required throughout this period as the situation is a fast changing one.

This is a rapidly changing landscape and we will update this guidance in line with National Guidelines.

Thank you again for your support, understanding and continued hard work during this very difficult time.

Carolyn Fair

Director of Children and Families

Judith Finlay

Executive Director Children, Adults and Public Health

Guidance Note 1: Visits and meetings

Visits to children, young people and parent/carers

Visits take place across the service to carry out assessments and to meet other statutory duties.

Underpinning all visits is the expectation that workers and managers work closely together to ensure that risks are addressed, and decisions clearly recorded with management oversight. This is essential at a time when usual practice is affected.

General expectations for visits

- A Manager needs to agree if a visit can be virtual or needs to be a physical visit

- The key function of visits is to ensure a child is safeguarded.
- All visits will need to be carried out in line with current timescales (except where agreed by a Head of Service)
- Visits will be carried out by the allocated worker if possible and if this can't happen, it will be done by a member of the 'Duty' team. The Team Manager should agree to this happening.
- Usual safeguarding risk assessments should take place
- Latest health and safety guidance should be followed (see OneSpace <https://ealingcouncil.sharepoint.com/pages/home.aspx>)

Carrying out visits – 3 Stage format (for all children, CIN, CP, LAC and Care Leavers and as part of any CFA)

When planning to visit for any reason the following three stages should be followed:

Stage 1: Regular physical visit

The Social Worker should telephone the parent/carer in advance of the planned visit to check whether they or any member of the household has any symptoms to suggest possible coronavirus or are already in self/household isolation or require social distancing. If this is the case, then the Social Worker should move to Stage 2 below. If all is reported as well the planned visit can go ahead.

Stage 2: Door-Step visit

If the parent/carer and child are in isolation the Social Worker should consider the possibility of a 'door-step' visit. This means that a physical visit can take place but the Social Worker should not enter the home, but speak with the child and parent/carer from a distance of 2 metres.

If it is considered inappropriate to carry out a 'door-step' visit then the Social Worker should move to Stage 3 below.

Stage 3: Virtual visit using facetime / skype or telephone

A virtual visit should take place only when it has been agreed by the Social Worker's Manager that a physical visit is not able to take place.

Face to Face Meetings at Perceval House

These should be no planned face to face meetings. In the exceptional circumstances that there is a 'walk in' e.g. care leavers, homeless families or young people involved in the Youth Justice System, there are designated rooms with a glass screen that can be used by a member of the duty team.

Guidance Note 2: Specific service operations and changes

Referrals and Assessments

- Child Protection referrals

The duty service based at Perceval House will respond to new child protection referrals, carry out visits and complete any assessments usually carried out by ECIRS and MAST.

- Child in Need referrals

These referrals will be allocated to the MAST teams as appropriate.

Looked After Children & Placements

A combined Adults and Children's Placements team has been set up - Commissioning Covid-19 Response (which includes officers from Contracts, Adults Safeguarding and the Art Team) and can be contacted on the usual ART number and email.

Where a child/young person is accommodated, they should continue to be accompanied to their placement by a Social Worker.

Where a child is placed with carers who are mildly unwell or in isolation, it is expected that the child will remain with their carers and be in household isolation with them if possible. Support will be offered to the carers and contact should be via door-step or virtual visit.

If a carer is too ill to undertake caring responsibilities, consideration should be taken as to who is best placed to care for the child, including potentially family members. Back up carers should be approached first and then extended family members of the foster carer/ others connected to the child. This would need to be a contact arrangement or reg 24 depending on circumstances. This should be discussed with a Head of Service. Risk assessments should be carried out.

If a placement is at risk of breakdown not due to illness, we will be looking to provide support to reduce the need for respite.

Emergency placements for young people who are aged 16 plus who are showing symptoms of Covid-19 are being commissioned – contact COVID-19 Commissioning team on the usual ART number.

Where a care leaver's placement becomes untenable a referral to ART should be made in the usual way.

Pre-Birth

A list of due dates of Unborn children open to Children's Services will be made available to the Duty team. Due to the increased vulnerability associated with pregnant women we will need to conduct visits in a way that balances the risk to the woman with the need to ensure planning for the unborn is informed. This will mean deciding with a manager on the type of visit needed.

Missing children

These children remain a priority group for safeguarding. They will be unable to self-isolate and unlikely to receive the medical attention they may require.

Where a child or young person goes missing the Social Worker should liaise with a Contextual Safeguarding Adviser re: next steps.

Homeless Children and Families

Homeless 16 & 17 year olds should be accommodated under s20 until the completion of an assessment with the agreement of a Head of Service.

Families with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) and Unaccompanied Minors should be dealt with as usual.

Should an unaccompanied child on the Croydon rota be symptomatic, Ealing will have the responsibility of finding an appropriate immediate placement.

Court work

The Family Courts are continuing to function, but this will undoubtedly change. Currently the Court workers will remain ring-fenced for active care proceedings and will not take part in the duty rota. This will be reviewed.

SAFE service

SAFE workers will work on their existing cases and identify cases to close. TAF meetings are unlikely to be held should all schools close. Key school contacts will need to be identified to enable virtual TAF meetings to be held to agree closure or ongoing plan if a need is high.

SAFE FSW workers will be expected to support the low level CIN work allocated to SW's in MAST teams whether on duty or WFH. If SAFE SW's receive work on the duty week they will follow through completion of this assessment.

New SAFE work will unlikely be referred and the SAFE service will be reviewed on a regular basis to look at the current demand and change in referral environment. If cases from SAFE escalate to Tier 3/4 and need section 17 or 47 assessment, this is to be undertaken by the SAFE Social worker.

Care Leavers:

Visits to care leavers should take place in line with the above 3 Stage format.

Where a care leaver living independently needs to self-isolate, a plan needs to be made to provide subsistence in the form of essentials and medicine for the period of isolation. Part of the plan will also need to include regular contact with the young person to provide emotional support to them at what will be an anxious time.

Foster Carer /Kinship/ Adoption visits

Visits should take place in line with the above 3 Stage format. If both a Supervising Social Worker and a child's Social Worker are due to visit, only one professional should attend the household to reduce footfall in the carers home. One record of the visit should be copied to both the child and carers file.

Contact

Contact will continue as usual, but parents and carers should be pre-called by the supervisor to ensure no-one is showing symptoms prior to children being picked up.

In the event of any party in isolation, phone calls, skype and facetime can be used with agreement of the allocated Social Worker.

Children with Disabilities (CWD)

Families with children with disabilities will come under rapidly increasing pressure with many community resources (including schools) becoming unavailable. CWD team social workers will remain ring-fenced to this cohort and will not take part in the duty rota.

Subsistence payments to care leavers and families

Payments should consider any additional costs to the family if self-isolating e.g. medicine, food and hygiene materials. Payments should be made in the usual way, where possible using BACS payments.

In emergencies providers can be asked to make additional payments to clients and these can be invoiced for.

Professionals Meetings

All meetings will move to being 'virtual' instead of face to face and in line with existing timescales.

This includes Child in Need Network meetings and reviews; Child Protection Conferences; LAC Reviews; Strategy meetings etc.

Additional guidance for the Child Protection Conference service will be provided.

Guidance Note 3: Staff supervision, team discussions and meetings

This guidance is service wide and covers all Statutory and Non- Statutory teams.

Guidance for conducting virtual meetings will be circulated to all staff and will be made available on the intranet.

Supervision

Managers and Deputy Team Managers are expected to carry out case supervision with their supervisees to existing timescales. This can be either face to face or virtual depending on circumstances.

Managers on duty will be expected to provide management direction to workers in the duty team who are dealing with referrals. A worker's regular manager will then take over case management.

Morning Meetings

The duty team at Perceval House should meet every morning to establish whether there is a full complement to the team and to review concerning cases.

Morning meetings take place first thing each morning virtually with those not involved in the Duty team based in Perceval House.

Heads of Service will meet with Team Managers from 9am to 9.30

Team Managers and Deputy Team Managers should meet from 9.30 to 10am.

Team Meetings

These will be replaced by a daily check-in meeting.

Panels

All Panels will continue to be held. There will be specific guidance and communication about how these are convened.

APPENDIX 2

London Borough of Ealing – Virtual Conference Guidance (Social Workers and Child Protection Advisors)

Effective from the 4th of May 2020, in response to Governmental guidance in relation to Covid-19, Child Protection Conferences will convene virtually through Microsoft Teams.

The key timescales for our conferences are as follows:

10 working days before the Conference

The Child Protection Admin Team will request a conference invite list from the allocated social work team.

As these meetings will be convening virtually, when social workers are completing invite lists, it is **essential** that the email addresses of conference attendees are reflected in the invites to assist with organising the meeting – as well as disseminating conference decisions and minutes electronically.

Child Protection Advisors, upon receiving the invite list, will send an electronic Microsoft Teams invite to the family (where feasible and appropriate) and professional network – via their email addresses.

On occasions where family members cannot or choose not to attend the virtual conference, Child Protection Advisors will arrange a separate Parental Consultation Meeting with them (where feasible and appropriate).

7 working days before the Conference

The allocated social worker will contact the family 7 working days before the conference date to confirm how reports will be shared with the family, either through secure email, posted or hand delivered.

During this discussion, the allocated social worker will also ascertain if there are any special considerations that need to be made to accommodate the family – such as interpreting services etc.

As Microsoft Teams allows for meeting initiators to contact mobile and landline telephones as well – families and professionals who do not have access to the application can be dialled into the meeting by CPAs.

If family members or professionals are not able to attend the conference via Microsoft Teams, they will need to contact the CPA who will be chairing the meeting and provide them with the telephone number that they will be best reached on – on the day.

5 working days before the Conference

The allocated social worker will go through their conference report with the family 5 working days before the conference.

Members of the family's multiagency professional network will be asked to ensure that their reports are with the allocated social worker 5 days before the conference date, as well. Upon receipt, the allocated social worker will be responsible for disseminating reports to the family and professional network (including the allocated CPA).

There is also an expectation that professional contributors to the conference arrange to speak to the contents of their reports with family members 5 days before the meeting as well.

Day of the Conference

On the day of the conference a virtual meeting will convene through Microsoft Teams. Professionals and family members will access the meeting by clicking on the Join Microsoft Teams notification within the electronic invite.

Although Microsoft Teams allows for video conferencing, it will not be an expectation that meeting attendees use this function whilst participating in conference discussions.

As previously mentioned, family members and professionals who cannot access the Microsoft Teams application will be dialled into the meeting, providing that they have informed the CPA of the number they are best placed to be contacted on – in advance of the meeting.

After the Conference

The decisions and minutes of the meeting will be disseminated to the family and professional network via secure email or an alternative method – as specified by the family or professional agency.

APPENDIX 3

London Borough of Ealing – Virtual Conference Guidance (Partner Agencies)

Effective from the 4th of May 2020, in response to Governmental guidance in relation to Covid-19, Child Protection Conferences will convene virtually through Microsoft Teams.

The key timescales for our conferences are as follows:

10 working days before the Conference

You will receive correspondence from the allocated social work team requesting key details such as your email address and telephone number (if you are unable to attend a virtual conference via Microsoft Teams), to ensure that you are added to the conference invite list.

Within this same timeframe you will receive an electronic Microsoft Teams invitation from the Child Protection Advisor (CPA) who will be chairing the meeting – sent to the address that you have provided as above.

If you are unable to attend the conference via Microsoft Teams, please contact the CPA who will be chairing the meeting (their contact details will be reflected in the electronic invitation) and provide them with the telephone number that they will be best placed to reach you on – on the day.

As Microsoft Teams allows for meeting initiators to contact mobile and landline telephones as well – professionals who do not have access to the application can be dialled into the meeting by CPAs.

5 working days before the Conference

You will be expected to provide a copy of your report for conference to the allocated social worker for dissemination to the family and wider professional network.

There is also an expectation that professional contributors to the conference arrange to speak to the contents of their reports with family members 5 days before the meeting as well (where feasible and appropriate).

Day of the Conference

On the day of the conference a virtual meeting will convene through Microsoft Teams. You will access the meeting by clicking on the Join Microsoft Teams notification within the electronic invite.

Although Microsoft Teams allows for video conferencing, it will not be an expectation that meeting attendees use this function whilst participating in conference discussions.

As mentioned, professional attendees who cannot access the Microsoft Teams application will be dialled into the meeting, providing that they have informed the CPA of the number they are best placed to be contacted on – in advance of the meeting.

After the Conference

The decisions and minutes of the meeting will be disseminated to you via secure email or an alternative method – as specified by yourself or your agency.