

COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Cranford Park Academy



Cranford Park Academy: Cranford Park Academy

Policy owner: Lorna Mitchell – Deputy Principal & Designated Safeguarding Lead

Date: 30.03.2020

Date shared with CEO:

Date shared with Academy Council Chair:

Date shared with staff:

1. Context

From 20th March 2020 government guidance was issued asking parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of key workers critical to the COVID-19 response - who absolutely need to attend as they are essential.

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 Cranford Park Academy Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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2. Vulnerable children
3. Attendance monitoring
4. Reporting a concern
5. Safeguarding Training and induction
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7. Online safety in schools and colleges
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9. Supporting children not in school
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12. Peer on Peer Abuse
13. Support from the Multi-Academy Trust

Key contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead Lorna Mitchell 07990 076243 lmitchell2@theparkfederation.org	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Ramya Logathas 07967 078659 rlogathas@theparkfederation.org	Principal Sarah Evans 07799 383437 sevens@theparkfederation.org
Safeguarding Governor on Academy Council Ranisha Dhamu 07956 955249 Ranisha.dhamu@brent.gov.uk	Family Support Worker Margaret O'Donovan 07771 614981 modonovan@theparkfederation.org	Borough Advisor for Child Protection & Safeguarding/ Deputy LADO. Hannah Ives 07753 431285 hives@hillingdon.gov.uk

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 a child 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 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

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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 will not be the determining factor in 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.

Cranford Park Academy 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 for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

The lead person for this will be **Lorna Mitchell** (DSL & Named teacher for LAC).

Cranford Park Academy will offer the opportunity for our vulnerable children and young people to attend school, 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 Cranford Park Academy will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

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

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.

Cranford Park Academy and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – Cranford Park Academy will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not.

Cranford Park Academy 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.

To support the above, Lorna Mitchell, DSL, will, when communicating with parents/carers 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, Lorna Mitchell, DSL will notify their social worker.

The optimal scenario is to have a member of staff trained at DSL level available on site. The DSL and DDSL will always be contactable by phone, either to speak to or video link with. 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, with full knowledge sharing with the DSL or DDSL.

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 Cranford Park Academy staff have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day staff on site will be made aware of that person is and how to speak to 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 Child Protection Policy and their level 1 safeguarding training, this includes having a verbal discussion either face to face, via a phone call or a video conference. There will also be the expectation that a report is made via CPOMS, which can be done remotely if needed.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Leads or Principal. This will ensure that the concern is received.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay. School closure does not change the urgency of these types of concerns or mean that we do not follow policy/procedure.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should make this known to the Principal. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Principal whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to them.

Concerns around the Principal should be directed to the Academy Council Chair, **Ranisha Dhamu**. The Park Federation will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

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 at Cranford Park Academy, 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

For movement within the Trust, schools should seek assurance from the school they would normally work at that members of staff have had the appropriate level of 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.

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. If recruiting new staff at this time, Cranford Park Academy 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.

Cranford Park Academy will continue to follow the legal duty as referred to in KCSIE related to the safe recruitment of staff into schools.

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During the COVID-19 period all referrals should be made by emailing 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, Cranford Park Academy will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

If there are concerns or allegations raised against members of staff, normal procedures should be followed, informing the Principal and DSL, ensuring the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Rob Wratten is contacted; 07919 115892 or rwratten@hillingdon.gov.uk.

Online safety in schools and colleges

Cranford Park Academy 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 The Park Federation code of conduct.

Cranford Park Academy 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 provided by The Park Federation to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

Supporting children not in school

Cranford Park Academy is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all the children in its care.

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. Communication will be made by the DSL, DDSL, SENCo or FSW.

For children with EHCPs the SEN team will be communicating weekly with these families to see how they are coping and discussing any support families feel that they might need.

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

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits (if appropriate as the situation progresses). Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

Cranford Park Academy 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.

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All communication with families will be logged on the contact tracking spreadsheets for vulnerable children as well as on CPOMS to make up that child's record.

Supporting children in school

Cranford Park Academy is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students. Cranford Park Academy will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Principal will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

Cranford Park Academy 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.

Cranford Park Academy 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 needed. If Cranford Park Academy has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – will discuss them immediately with the school Principal and CEO.

Mental Health

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. Teachers should be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home. The department is providing separate guidance on providing education remotely.

Where they are providing for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, schools and colleges should ensure appropriate support is in place for them. Our guidance on mental health and behaviour in schools (which may also be useful for colleges) sets out how mental health issues can bring about changes in a young person's behaviour or emotional state which can be displayed in a range of different ways, and that can be an indication of an underlying problem. Support for pupils and students in the current circumstances can include existing provision in the school (although this may be delivered in different ways, for example over the phone) or from specialist staff or support services. You can read the guidance on [mental health and behaviour in schools](#).

Cranford Park Academy 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 Cranford Park Academy need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home, whether that be on the school website or through a platform such as Google Classroom.

Cranford Park Academy 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 needed.

Please see link for further advice during this time: <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/for-children-and-young-people/coronavirus/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Cranford Park Academy 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 as would usually happen.

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Support from the Park Federation Trust

The Park Federation Academy Trust will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL to carry out their role effectively.