



STARLINGS PRESCHOOL

COVID-19 ADDENDUM SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

We are following the statutory guidance, keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) (DfE, 2020g). We are reviewing our child protection policy and revising it in line with current circumstances. A COVID-19 addendum to the above safeguarding policy in guidance for safeguarding during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is below.

Information:

During the COVID-19 pandemic all preschools are closed except those who provide care and education to children that are vulnerable and children whose parents are key workers (Cabinet office and Department for Education (DfE), 2020). Starlings Preschool is open during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Vulnerable children are those who have a social worker and those aged up to 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans. This includes children who have a child protection plan or are looked after.

Children may also be deemed vulnerable if they have been assessed as being in need or meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989 (Department for Education (DfE), 2020j).

Guidelines:

Across the UK preschools and other childcare settings should remain open for children who are vulnerable and children whose parent are key workers (DfE, 2020b; Department of Education, 2020c, Scottish Government, 2020a; Welsh Government, 2020b)

In England, all children with a social worker and have on-going cases/care are expected to go to preschool, providing they do not have any underlying health conditions that put them or others at risk. However, if parents of vulnerable children don't want to send them to preschool, then the social workers and preschool should explore the reasons for this and encourage parents to allow their children to attend (DfE 2020j)

In **England, Northern Ireland** and **Wales**, key workers are those whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response. This includes those working in the following sectors:

- **Health and social care** including doctors, nurses, midwives, paramedics, social workers, care workers and staff required to maintain the health and social care sector.
- **Education and childcare** including teachers, support staff, social workers and specialist education staff.



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- **Local and national government** including only those administrative occupations essential to the delivery of the COVID-19 response or delivering essential public services.
- **Food and other necessary goods** including those involved in food production, processing, distribution, sale and delivery, and those involved in the provision of hygienic and veterinary medicines.
- **Public safety and national security** including police, support staff, contractor and armed forces personnel, fire and rescue service employees, those maintaining border security, prison and probation staff and other national security roles.
- **Transport** including those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating and those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass.
- **Utilities, communication and financial services** including those working in banks and building societies, the oil, gas, water and electricity sectors, the information technology and data infrastructure sector, the civil nuclear, chemicals and telecommunications sectors, postal and delivery services, payment providers and waste disposal.
- Other workers essential to **key public services** (Cabinet Office and DfE, 2020; Department of Education, 2020d; Welsh Government, 2020c).

In **England and Wales**, “workers essential to key public services” includes: • those essential to the running of the justice system

- religious staff
- charities and workers delivering key front-line services
- those responsible for the management of the deceased
- journalists and broadcasters

(Cabinet Office and DfE, 2020; Welsh Government, 2020c).

PLEASE NOTE:- If one parent however is NOT a keyworker then the child(ren) should be cared for at home.

We always have a DSL/Deputy (designated safeguarding lead) on site at all times and they are responsible for co-ordinating safeguarding on site (DfE, 2020e). If any member of staff is concerned about a child, then they should inform and take the route as stated in our safeguarding policy and procedures.

When entering the preschool staff and children and any visitors that we have planned are asked wash their hands before anything else. Before the children enter the preschool, they are also to leave the children’s lunchboxes on the trolley outside and not to bring in any toys or blankies into the setting from home. The staff are advised to wear gloves, masks and aprons when accepting children into the setting, they do not have to wear these throughout the day as per government guidelines given. Parents leave their children at



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the door with the staff and do not enter the premises. Antibacterial hand gel is available for staff to use throughout the day as well as them washing their hands frequently.

Daily all toilets are flushed throughout the building and the taps are run for a period of time and the building checked for any damage. All door handles and light switches are wiped down also each day.

Any meetings that need to happen regarding safeguarding issues will happen via telephone conversation, information sent by secure email or in case of CP meetings via video link meetings.

Attendance:

The attendance of all the children attending preschool during the COVID-19 pandemic are recorded in a register specifically for this period of time and staff each day are also recorded in this register.

A daily attendance form which enables to keep track of attendance for safeguarding purposes and allow DfE to track capacity (DfE, 2020a) is sent to SFYC (services for young children) during this period.

If a child we have registered to attend during this time with us does not attend, we will follow up with parents, carers and advise the local authorities, children's social care worker as necessary.

Children who aren't defined as vulnerable who make be at risk may attend school:

We offer places under the guidance that states "educational settings and designated safeguarding leads will know who their most vulnerable children are"

We have flexibility to offer places to children who are "on the edge" of receiving support from children's social care (DfE, 2020j)

How we protect children who are not attending:

We are keeping in touch with vulnerable children who are not attending the setting and/or described as children who are "on the edge" via telephone calls and liaising with other local schools and authorities. These calls are only made within the settings opening hours from 9-3pm. (DfE 2020f)



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Child welfare: implementing social distancing:

The department of Education (DfE) has published guidance on social distancing for childcare settings. This sets out measures for preschool to take to minimise the risk of transmission of coronavirus whilst ensuring children are being well cared for (DfE, 2020d) Starlings preschool are undertaking and complying with this guidance.

Parents must comply with social distancing guidelines, however guidelines state that where parents do not live in the same household, children under 18 can move between their parent's homes (cabinet office, 2020) Carcass has also published guidance on co-parenting and contact arrangements. (Cafcass, 2020) Parents are to communicate with each other and decide what is in the best interest and practical to maintaining the conditions of child arrangement orders during the pandemic. If this isn't practical alternative arrangements should be made to maintain contact.

Mental health and well-being:

Starlings preschool is mindful of the current circumstances and how it is affecting children and families and staff during this this time. We are providing home learning to the children at home through our online Tapestry platform with ideas not only on learning but through messages of support and well-being keeping in touch to make sure everything is ok. Existing provision for mental support for children and young people may be delivered through different means, for example over the phone if needed (DfE, 2020e).

Stigma attending school because being vulnerable:

Guidance states that the majority of children attending school at the moment will be there because their parents are key workers. This means that vulnerable children should not be easily identifiable by their peers (DfE, 2020j); Department of Education 2020b)

This policy was adopted by Starlings Preschool

On 6th September 2021

Date to be reviewed

Signed on behalf of the management committee

Name of signatory Tricia Hunt

Role of signatory Chairperson