



## **Covid-19 Annex**

20<sup>th</sup> March 2020 - In response to the Coronavirus Pandemic, Welsh Government announced that schools will close for statutory education provision.

Schools would have a new purpose providing distance learning, identification and support of their vulnerable learners and key worker's children whilst ensuring continuity of learning opportunities for their pupils whilst at home

Guidance, developed by Welsh Government and others across Education Safeguarding, Education and Health sectors, has been collated to support schools deliver services during this unprecedented situation

Distance Learning: In preparation for closure, schools have made arrangements to support and enable their pupils continue learning activities at home: with learning provided via safe on-line platforms such as Class DoJo and Google classroom - (Appendix 1, page 5)

Education Safeguarding Team (EST) and others have developed guidance on safe online practices including maintaining professional boundaries for the safety of pupils and staff alike – (Appendix 2, page 6)

For those pupils without access to on line learning, schools will continue to provide alternative learning options such as access to paper workbooks while the Education Department pursues its commitment to ensuring digital provision for those children who are without.

EST has coordinated a table of provision across Cardiff schools: this allows for the sharing of tips and good practice as well as sharing provision to promote equality of access to distance learning opportunities.

### Digital Deprivation - update

As of 12/6/20, over 6000 Chromebooks/iPads will have been given to digitally deprived pupils across the city, that is a mix of 3000 existing devices from within schools and 3000 brand new ones which were bought specifically to address the digital deprivation issue. In addition, 1500 4G mobile broadband devices have been given out.

Every secondary school child identified as digitally deprived will have been given kit as will the vast majority of primary and special school children.

600 devices are pending distribution: waiting on orders for more Chromebook and iPad cases are on order

Laptops have been ordered for every teacher in Cardiff, with plan to be distributed prior to schools return on the 29<sup>th</sup> June.

14,000 Chromebook have been ordered to start the process towards moving to a 1:1 deployment across the city.

All EOTAS children where required have been supplied with a device and we have trained all the EOTAS tutors in using Hwb, Google classrooms and MS Teams.

Parents/carers and social workers have been advised to speak directly with the child's school for provision in the first instance and to report any concerns to EST to take issue forward.

Keeping in touch-Schools were tasked with rating the vulnerability of their pupils using traffic light system (RAG): the RAG rating is used by schools to determine how often contact is made with their vulnerable families. Schools should ensure that parents/carers/pupils understand the need to remain in touch and continue to review the RAG rating and successful contact with those families to provide or signpost for additional support/services as may be required.

Where schools have had no response to contact attempts with families known to Children's Services, schools must share their concerns with the allocated social worker or relevant Children's Services Team

Where schools have had no response to contact attempts with families not known to Children's Services, from 20<sup>th</sup> April schools have recourse to the Escalation and Referral Process provided by the Education Welfare Service (EWS) – (Appendix 3, page 7)

### Hub Model

Selected schools are currently re-designated Hubs. Hubs are providing child care for key worker's children and vulnerable learners.

Key workers - Parents/carers who identify as Keyworkers can check their status by visiting WG Guidance – Coronavirus critical (key) workers: childcare and education provision. Key workers can apply for full time provision for their children via online application accessed on Cardiff Council's website – Keyworker child care provision - Appendix 4, page 8.

Vulnerable Learners – childcare provision for vulnerable pupils are considered at the Joint Vulnerable Learners Panel jointly managed between Education and Children's Services. The Panel currently sits Monday, Thursday and Friday for compulsory school age children, including EOTAS and 16+ including NEET and Wednesday for pre-school age children. This is currently under review in line with Welsh Government plans that all schools should re-open from 29<sup>th</sup> June - Appendix 5, page 9.

Provision is considered by the Panel on basis of BRAG rating and consensus of risks by schools and Children's Services: any requests for provision made directly to schools must be referred to the Panel for consideration.

This will continue to be reviewed as part of the planning arrangements for schools opening for 4 weeks from 29<sup>th</sup> June

Panel decision is shared with the school and/or nominated worker by panel member, with schools to liaise directly with social worker or relevant other to take forward the provision. Any difficulties in contact between schools and allocated social worker is escalated via Children's Services Panel administrator to EST administrator to facilitate contact

Attendance – is reviewed weekly and non-attendance shared with allocated social workers to inform their review of risks and actions required. No response from social worker is escalated by Children's Services Panel member as required

### Safeguarding Arrangements in the Hubs

Schools can draw on Welsh Government published guidance for Schools on safeguarding children during the Coronavirus pandemic.

If they haven't already done so Hubs should download the Practitioner Handbook for all staff and display the Poster: designated safeguarding person which reinforces the continued safeguarding responsibilities to ensure that the continued protection and wellbeing of children remains of paramount importance

Welsh Government has advised all schools and colleges to review and revise their child protection policy as circumstances continue to evolve during the pandemic. EST has collated much of the available Covid 19 related Guidance within this annex to its Child Protection model policy for schools document for schools to adopt, adapt and add to, to ensure its CP Policy is up to date and the annex Covid 19 relevant

<https://gov.wales/education-safeguarding-guidance-coronavirus>

## **Education safeguarding guidance: Coronavirus**

EST operates a daily duty service during core business hours, Monday – Thursday 8:30am – 5pm and Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm and can be contacted via [EducationSafeguarding@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:EducationSafeguarding@cardiff.gov.uk) for advice and information.

Any immediate Child Protection concerns should be reported to the police (999) and Children's Services at MASH – 02920 536 490

Virtual DSP training – EST has adapted its DSP training provision for Microsoft Teams on line platform. Nominations for places should be sent to the Education Safeguarding/Diogelu Addysg [EducationSafeguarding@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:EducationSafeguarding@cardiff.gov.uk).

Refresher DSP training is not currently being provided: but DSPs due for refresher training will be sent the updated PowerPoint Presentation to review and have an

opportunity to send questions to Nikki Loukisas, ESO. Responding directly to the individual question and share as FAQ at an on line session planning virtual DSP training for the start of the autumn term for staff new to the role. We will be in touch once the plans have been finalised. Staff who wish to have DSP training should notify Education Safeguarding in order to collate numbers.

### **Future planning-**

Kirsty Williams, Education Minister- with the announcement that schools will re-open on 29<sup>th</sup> June, schools and education services are starting planning arrangements to support pupil's safest return to school including continued arrangements for those keyworker and vulnerable children for whom provision has been essential.

These arrangements will be subject to continued guidance from Welsh Government and information from safeguarding partners across Health, social care and the Police and the situation remains unsettled and unsettling.

Schools should ensure they add emergent guidance to their Child Protection Policy under Covid-19 annex to ensure their staff are informed and children's safety and wellbeing is assured when attending Hub/school provision and that any concerns about children's safety and wellbeing in the home or community is reported in line with the school's duty to report safeguarding concerns and recorded on the school's system which should be Quality Assured by the DSP or deputy DSP with remedial actions taken as required

## Appendix 1

## Safeguarding Guidance for Online Distance Learning

Acceptable use	<p>Any acceptable use policy you may have for the use of technology in school also applies when using technology for any form of distance learning for both staff and pupils.</p> <p><a href="#">Example of an AUP from Rhiwbeina Primary School</a></p>
Platforms	<p>For direct communication with pupils use the recommended platforms provided through Hwb where possible as the necessary due diligence has been carried out in relation to their security:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams, Flipgrid, J2e.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Synchronous vs Asynchronous Communication with pupils</b></p> <p>Synchronous or 'live' streaming of sessions with pupils can be extremely useful for keeping in contact with pupils but you need to consider a few things.</p>	
Setting	<p>For younger pupils in particular it would be inappropriate for them to be in their bedroom for example. Encourage pupils to be in a social space, preferably accompanied by their parent or other adult – communicate this to your pupils/parents.</p>
Network Connection	<p>Consider the fragility of each pupil's network connection (or if they even have one). Children are likely to get stressed if their connection drops off during the session (FOMO in and educational environment!)</p>
Length of session	<p>Keep any direct sessions as short as possible (no more than ten minutes for younger pupils) and use them to give a brief overview of the topics you want the children to cover in a given time period.</p>
Turn off chat!	<p>If you are using live video it is worth considering turning off the chat feature on your chosen platform during the sessions.</p>
Asynchronous	<p>Asynchronous sessions give both learners and teachers much more flexibility and a much safer environment to work in, minimising the unexpected whilst ensuring interaction. So, post pre-prepared video, podcasts and other content via your chosen learning platform and outline to students how they can post responses.</p>
Behaviour	<p>Be clear about the expectations of both student and staff behaviour (e.g. a 'classroom standard' of behaviour is expected from all participants).</p> <p>It is worth considering some ground rules; creating safe spaces and explaining these as the introduction to each session. Examples may be who can speak. If this is the first time that classes are delivered online, it may take some time in becoming familiar with the new environment.</p>
<p><i>Cardiff Schools e-learning Service March 2020</i></p>	

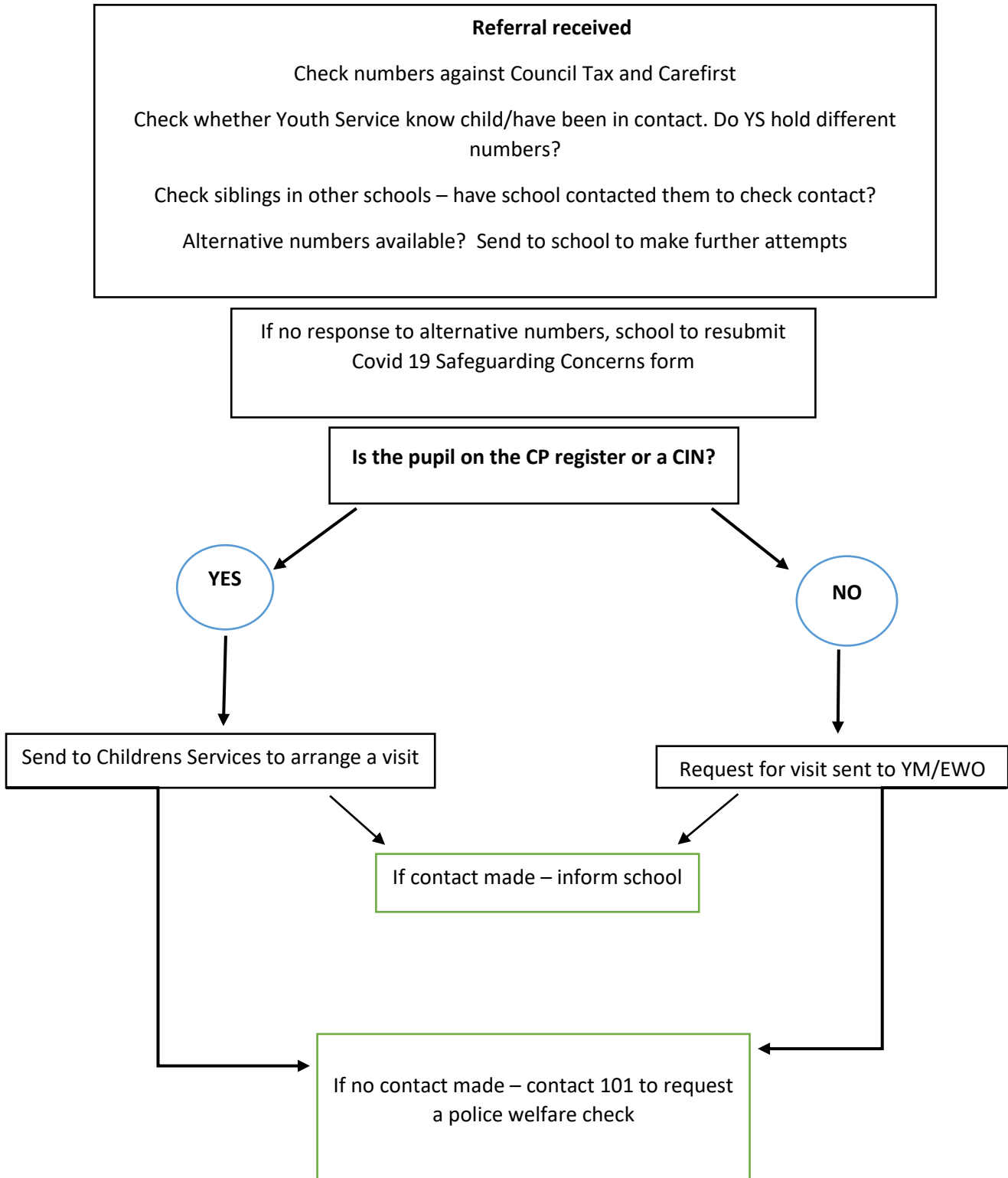
**Maintaining professional boundaries online.**

During COVID 19 we are working under unusual circumstances and in extremely uncharted territory. There may be occasions where as a professional you may need to video call a pupil and/or parent. (Please refer to Safeguarding Guidance for Distance learning) It is crucial that everybody understands that this is for COVID 19 only. Clear parameters of professional boundaries must be set. Clearly outlining the purpose of the call, what is expected from School/Staff member and similarly what is to be expected of the pupil and/or parent. The meetings are to be held at times that will be pre-arranged and mutually agreed. Clear parameters of Staff members' availability needs to be set and that video calls/calls only to take place during core working hours. With line management approval this may take place outside of the normal working hours if this is mutually agreed and in the child's best interest. The value in providing this service and the risk in not providing the service needs to be demonstrated. Is the purpose of this contact in the pupil's best interest? If this is the case then appropriate assessment of any risks will be required. The pupil that you are speaking with may find it quite fascinating having such contact with a member of school staff in what may appear as a rather informal setting hence the need to maintain that professional boundary.

We would therefore suggest the following;

- Consider personal data that may be in background of the video call
- Consider conduct of own family members, house mates etc.
- Consider your general location when carrying out the call (you may not wish for your location/home address to be made obvious)
- Appropriate dress
- Where possible to use Skype or Zoom or other platforms that are more often associated with business use.
- As always to be vigilant and if you see or hear anything that causes concern then share this concern
- Record/log any video calls that take place

Where a school or EOTAS provision has been unable to make contact with a family and have exhausted all known contacts/wider family networks, they should complete the EWS COVID 19 Safeguarding Concerns form and email to [ewsreferrals@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:ewsreferrals@cardiff.gov.uk)





A list of all cases detailing the panel outcome to be sent to team managers on a weekly basis.

Circumstances change e.g. placement breakdown or child needs to be re-considered for respite childcare provision in hub: Re – refer case with new information.

SW and school Hub to remain in regular contact to address any concerns and monitor non attendance. – BRAG rating and communication plan to be updated accordingly.

**Multi-agency monitoring and support to the family**  
Lead officer will be identified to coordinate support and provide updates to the panel as required.

School will contact Social Worker and Family to advise them of the arrangements

Multi-agency monitoring and support, including a respite place in a Childcare Hub. Education Achievement Leader will contact school and hub lead to arrange. Provision consists of 2 part-time sessions a week.

NO

YES

**Multi agency discussion: Are criteria met?**  
**Risk assessment: is a Hub placement appropriate?**

### Joint Vulnerable Learner Panel

Cases discussed daily

School age focus – Monday, Tuesday, Thursday Preschool – Wednesday Post 16 – Friday

- Identify Lead officer
- Confirm BRAG status
- Identify other teams involved.

If agreed make a referral to the Joint Vulnerable Learner panel for multi-agency discussion. Send an email to Rebecca Brockway: [Rebecca.Brockway2@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:Rebecca.Brockway2@cardiff.gov.uk) CC: team manager  
-Include: Names, DOB, agencies involved and reason for escalating concerns

*Where possible we need to adhere to government guidelines. Team managers need to consider whether the risks of attending education provision outweigh the risk of remaining home.*

Social Worker to discuss concerns with Team Manager and ensure BRAG status is updated accordingly and all concerns are recorded on Care First.

Social Worker has concerns regarding a child and believes they are in need of education provision or enhanced coordinated support

Do not contact schools directly to request places as all requests must be processed through the panel.

## **Joint Vulnerable Learner Panel (JVLP)**

### **Purpose /role of the panel**

The Joint Vulnerable Learner Panel has been established at the time of the COVID -19 Pandemic to ensure that there is joint discussion between Children's Services and Education to ensure the safety and welfare of children and young people within Cardiff. This important piece of joint working will enable the LA to effectively map and audit provision to learners who have been identified as being vulnerable and to share accountability at this difficult time.

The panel will have four main aims:

1. The panel will agree after discussion a BRAG rating for the learner and will establish who the lead officer will be in CS and/or Education to monitor the child's/young person's well-being/safety
2. Identify appropriate actions to ensure the safety and welfare of children and young people in the family home
3. Establish if there are compelling social grounds for sessional attendance at a hub.
4. If hub provision is not viable for whatever reason the panel may help shape provision through creative means where possible

### **Membership**

The membership of the panel for children 3-16 will be consistent and will include Achievement Leaders from Education, representation from the Safeguarding team and from Operational Management in Children's Services. For discussion of children 0-3 there will be representation from the Early Help team and an Operational Manager from CS. For discussion of young people post 16 there will be representation from the Youth Offending Service and the Youth Service. There will be a consistent administrator from Children's Services and another from Education. Membership maybe extended as the panel develops over time and Headteacher representation at some panels pursued.

### **Accountability**

Panel members will be responsible for reporting back to their individual departments and all relevant parties within those departments e.g. senior management within Education and Children's Services, social workers, specialist teachers, schools and hub lead headteachers.

### **Review**

The group will review weekly the relevance and the value of the panel and the terms of reference and refine as necessary.

### **Working methods / ways of working:**

- Panels to discuss school age children 3-16 will be held virtually, three days a week within allotted two-hour sessions. The panel will be chaired by either the Principal Educational Psychologist or an Achievement Leader.
- There will be discussion about:

- Any learners in Cardiff who the SW has flagged as black or red or where there are particular safeguarding concerns.
- Learners where concerns have escalated and have become known via the specialist teams and/or psychologists linked to the schools
- Learners who schools have communicated to us that they have increasing concerns re their safety/vulnerability/well being
- The caseload will be securely held on SharePoint and accessible to all panel members. The database management will be overseen by a named administrator in Education and a named administrator in Children's Services
- The panel meetings format will be discussion around the individual learners referred to the panel. The decisions that will be made:
  - The BRAG rating of the case following discussion
  - Whether respite sessions in an education hub are recommended i.e. help safe guard a child/prevent a placement breakdown
  - The identification of lead officer moving forward
- Background information from CS and Education will ensure that decisions are made based on the most up to date information available. Information will be included from Care First and Education One system
- The risk assessment will take these factors and questions into consideration:
  - The age and any additional needs of the child/learner/young person
  - Any emotional health and wellbeing needs and associated risks. e.g. attachment needs, risk of absconding
  - Can needs be safely met in Hub childcare provision?
  - Is child/young person normally EOTAS?
  - Are safety concerns already being managed in another way? e.g. social worker visits / video contact
  - Final evaluative judgement will be based on: risk of harm/placement breakdown vs risk of getting the virus from leaving the home
  - Decisions may be re-visited if the home school/hub feel that they can't meet the needs of the learner based on their own thorough risk assessment of all factors.
    - Other routes to have support for the learner will then be explored by the panel
- One meeting a week will focus on children in early years and panel members will include Early help and OM from Children's Services
- One meeting a week will focus on post 16 young people and include the OM for Youth Offending Service and youth service representation
- There will be a weekly summary session on a Friday where concerns are considered for escalation and attendance at hubs by vulnerable pupils is monitored
- Operation Encompass will operate as usual with information communicated via home schools to hub schools if appropriate. Any escalation of concerns to this panel will be made through the Social Worker
- One meeting a week will include a headteacher in the role of 'critical friend'

### **Sharing of information**

All updates will be held on the central database only accessible to panel members

Confidentiality will be adhered to at all times

