



**COVID-19 Registered Childcare Provider
Addendum Safeguarding and Child
Protection Policy at
Cornerstone Preschool**

Context

From 20th March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for childcare providers (including nurseries, pre-schools, childminders and provers of childcare for school-aged children), schools and colleges to remain open only for those children identified as vulnerable or children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response - who absolutely need to attend.

All childcare providers were therefore being asked to continue to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

This addendum of the Cornerstone Preschool Safeguarding and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Iva Juma	0208 5568585	preschoolleader@cornerstoneunder5s.org.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads	Masooma bokhari	0208 5568585	Key6@cornerstoneunder5s.org.uk
Named Person responsible for Allegations against Staff	Iva Juma	0208 5568585	preschoolleader@cornerstoneunder5s.org.uk
SENCo / Special Needs Lead	Iva Juma	0208 5568585	preschoolleader@cornerstoneunder5s.org.uk
Manager / Owner	Ruby Marwat	0208 5568585/ 07421243182	office@cornerstoneunder5s.org.uk
Named Deputy	Iva Juma	0208 5568585	preschoolleader@cornerstoneunder5s.org.uk
Chair of Governors / Chair of Trustees/Managing Director or Business Owner (Sole Traders)	Bill Donoghue	07719754849	Bill.donoghue@thecornerstone.org.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 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 childcare 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 visiting the home or regular contact to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

Eligibility for the early year's pupil premium, or the disadvantaged 2-year-old entitlement should not be determining factors 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.

Cornerstone Preschool 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 (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children. The lead person for this will be: Ruby Marwat

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend the childcare setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at increased risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to the childcare setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and Cornerstone Preschool will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

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

Attendance

Cornerstone Preschool 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.

Cornerstone Preschool will, if caring for a child who does not ordinarily attend the setting obtain the child's dietary requirements, medical needs and any additional relevant information to safeguard their health, safety and welfare.

Cornerstone Preschool and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending an Early Years provision – Cornerstone Preschool will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. Cornerstone Preschool 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.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, Cornerstone Preschool will notify their social worker.

Any children that are considered as vulnerable or subject to child protection plans and contact cannot be made with the parent/carer the allocated Social Worker are to be informed of their absence.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Cornerstone Preschool school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Iva Juma (in her absence Masooma Bokhari)

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Masooma Bokhari (in her absence Ruby Marwat)

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example when working from home.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a suitably trained and knowledgeable senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

This might include updating and managing access to child protection recording and management systems 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 childcare setting.

It is important that all Cornerstone Preschool staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day, the staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to contact 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 Cornerstone Preschool Safeguarding Policy.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concern to Iva Juma (in her absence Masooma Bokhari). Concerns around the Named Person responsible for Allegations against Staff should be directed to the Helen Stedford Lead responsibility for Safeguarding.

If staff are concerned that they cannot report this they should utilise the whistleblowing process and contact lado@walthamforest.gov.uk

The Safeguarding Lead for Early Years will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

Where Cornerstone Preschool has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or paediatric first aiders – we will discuss them immediately with the Safeguarding in Education Service.

Any immediate concerns for the safety of children please contact the MASH team or 999 in an emergency.

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 Cornerstone Preschool staff have had safeguarding training and have read the Cornerstone Preschool Safeguarding Policy. 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, or new volunteers enter Cornerstone Preschool, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

If staff are furloughed to our setting, 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

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. When recruiting new staff,

Cornerstone Preschool will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in section 3 of Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (2021) (EYFS).

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.

If staff are furloughed to our setting, 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

Where Cornerstone Preschool are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraph 3.11 of the EYFS. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Cornerstone Preschool will continue to follow the legal duty to refer to the DBS anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Full details can be found at paragraph 3.13 of the EHFS and further guidance in paragraph 163 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) (KCSIE).

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current National emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any childcare provider is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the setting, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity.

Paediatric First Aid Certificates

If paediatric first aid certificate requalification training is prevented for reasons associated directly with coronavirus (COVID-19) or by complying with related government advice, the validity of current certificates can be extended by up to 31st March 2021..

Staff to Child Ratios

It is considered that the extent of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak to be an exceptional temporary circumstance in which the staff to child ratios set out in the EYFS can be changed on occasion, if this is absolutely necessary (particularly as settings continue to receive their full free early education entitlement funding during the Summer term, which along with fee paid by parents/carers for additional hours should cover staffing costs to the EYFS required adult to child ratios), however this

should not compromise the wellbeing and safety of the children in the care of Cornerstone Preschool. Cornerstone Preschool remains responsible for ensuring the safety and security of children in our care.

Paragraph 3.31 of the EYFS states that 'Exceptionally, and where the quality of care and safety and security of children is maintained, changes to the ratios may be made. However, in responding to specific needs, providers must observe a higher staff:child ratio than outlined in the EYFS to ensure the safety and welfare of children as determined by Ofsted.

Closure of Setting

Where settings have made the decision to close, and will be able to access funding or additional income streams to limit the impact on financial sustainability, our expectation would be that these setting would ensure that a suitable number of people continue to work for the organisation on order to carry out the role of the DSL (in line with Government requirements):

- Contact the Social Workers of children who meet the vulnerable children criteria advising that the setting will be closing.
- Contact parents of children who meet the vulnerable children criteria to encourage them to attend an early years setting so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at severe risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and setting should explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.
- Share resources with families on a regular basis, ideally no less than once a week, to support children's learning at home. This would include encouraging them to join the Councils Chit Chat Pitter Pat facebook group (details have been sent previously)
- Work with the local authority to monitor the welfare of vulnerable children who are not attending provision, and other children you might wish to keep in touch with, for safeguarding purposes.
- Where parents are concerned about the risk of their child contracting the virus, the setting should talk through these concerns with the parent following the advice set out by [Public Health England](#).
- Settings and social workers should agree with families whether children in need should be attending nurseries or childcare. Settings should follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend. In all relevant circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their childcare place, or discontinues, the setting should notify their social worker.

- Those with an EHC plan should be risk-assessed by settings in consultation with the local authority and parents, to decide whether they still need a childcare place, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home.

Support from the Safeguarding in Education Service

The Safeguarding in Education Service will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL to carry out their role effectively.

This includes providing support, guidance and direction. Providers should also ensure that they read the weekly newsletter to ensure that they are kept up to date

The Safeguarding in Education Service will maintain weekly contact with Ofsted registered providers (full daycare, preschool and childminders) providers who remain open and can provide information, advice and support as well as group and individual supervision sessions if required. This may take the form of an online meeting.

Useful Contact Numbers

MASH: 020 8496 2310

LADO: lado@walthamforest.gov.uk
020 8496 3646
Caroline Coyston: 07770 052 421
Gill Nash: 07791 559 789

Safeguarding in Education: safeguardingineducation@walthamforest.gov.uk
Jennifer Knight: 07866 314 144
Caroline Coyston: 07770 052 421