

# Policy



## COVID-19 Addendum to Safeguarding Policy

*Nurturing today's young people,  
Inspiring tomorrow's exemplary citizens*

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## **SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION**

The DfE has published updated guidance on the full return to schools from September 2020 and can be accessed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools#contents>

This guidance outlines that as schools return to full operation, the following needs to be considered in relation to the safeguarding of pupils:

- School leaders should provide more time to safeguarding leads and deputies to help support staff and pupils;
- It is anticipated that during lockdown there may have been unseen and unknown safeguarding issues, and resources maybe required to meet any additional demand;
- Communication with school nurses and public health officials should be robust to allow rapid and effective information sharing, response and support.

## **SECTION 2 – VULNERABLE CHILDREN**

Where there is a partial or full closure of the school, there is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker and children of parents whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response will attend school, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. Vulnerable children include children who are supported by social care and those with safeguarding and welfare needs, including those with child in need plans or child protection plans, looked after children, young carers, disabled children and those with education, health and care (EHC) plans. School leaders may also want to include other children facing social difficulties. Parents whose work is critical to the COVID-19 response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors. The school will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children.

## **SECTION 3 – DSL ARRANGEMENTS**

There will be trained DSL on site as most children return to school. In exceptional circumstances where this is not possible, a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available for contact via phone or online video, for example when working from home. In addition to the above, a senior leader DSL will assume responsibility for co-coordinating safeguarding



on site. The DSL will continue to engage with social workers and attend all multi-agency meetings as and when required

## **SECTION 4 – SUPPORTING CHILDREN NOT IN SCHOOL**

When children are unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice, the school will continue to maintain regular contact with pupils and families. Where a class, group or small number of children needs to self-isolate, or there is a local lockdown requiring pupils to remain at home, the school will follow the guidance outlined above and offer remote education. We recognise that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances can affect their mental health and wellbeing and that of their parents/carers. Teachers will take family wellbeing into account when setting expectations of pupils' work when they are at home.

## **SECTION 5 – SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN SCHOOL**

School will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend. The headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and that staff to pupil ratios are appropriate, to maximise safety. The school will refer to the Government guidance 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 COVID-19. Where the school has concerns about the impact of the absence of staff, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders, the head will discuss them immediately with the trustee in charge. It is recognised that staff, parents/carers and children may experience some degree of anxiety about the return to school.

## **SECTION 6 – REPORTING A CONCERN**

The school will continue to use its normal referral processes for any children where it has concerns, in line with the school's Safeguarding Policy. The school will continue to use its normal referral processes for any adults working with children where it has concerns, in line with the school's Safeguarding Policy.

## **SECTION 7 – ATTENDANCE RECORDING AND ABSCENCE MONITORING**

Absence procedures for phone calls and home visits will be followed in line with the Safeguarding guidance for schools in the event of a school closure.

## **SECTION 8 – SAFEGUARDING TRAINING AND INDUCTION**

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 have missed their refresher training. All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020). The DSL will 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 the school, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction. All staff will maintain the view that 'it could happen here' and report any concern to the DSL or Deputy DSL.

## **SECTION 9 – SAFER RECRUITMENT**

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, the school will continue to follow the safer recruitment processes in line with the school's Recruitment and Selection Policy, Safeguarding Policy, and including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) (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, which the school will follow. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-changes-to-dbs-id-checking-guidelines>. The school 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 in KCSIE. Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current national emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that the school remains aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school, and is assured that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. The school will continue to keep its single central record (SCR) up to date in line with the school's Safeguarding Policy and as outlined in KCSIE.

## **SECTION 10 – ONLINE SAFETY IN SCHOOLS**

The school will continue to provide a safe environment including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system.

## **SECTION 11 – ONLINE SAFETY AWAY FROM SCHOOL**

Referred to DFE Guidance - Safeguarding and remote education during coronavirus (COVID-19) Contact will be made by telephone or school email accounts with pupils who are not yet able to return to school. They will have access to remote learning. DSLs are still available during the period of closure or remote working via emails. It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs that a child may be at risk. Any

such concerns should be dealt with as per the Safeguarding Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

Where webinars are used for remote education, the following safeguarding issues will be considered:

- Language and behaviour must be professional and appropriate.
- Questions and answers from both staff and pupils must be professional and appropriate.
- Any concerns about inappropriate language, questions or answers raised in webinars from either staff or pupils must be referred to the Principal.
- The live webinar should be recorded and backed up elsewhere, so that if any issues were to arise, the webinar can be reviewed.

Where live webcams are used for remote education, the following safeguarding issues will be considered:

- No individual teaching will take place. As far as possible, there should be no fewer than 5 pupils in one group or class.
- Data Controllers will reassure themselves that any teaching/learning software and/or platforms are suitable and raise no privacy issues; nor will they infringe the provider's terms and conditions (for example, there will be no business use of consumer products).

## **SECTION 12 – PEER-ON-PEER ABUSE**

Where the school receives a report of peer-on-peer abuse, it will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and in line with the school's Safeguarding Policy. The school will listen to and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multi-agency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person. As and when required. Concerns and actions must be recorded on the safeguarding platform and appropriate referrals made.