



Whiteshill Primary School
Diocese of Gloucester
Academies Trust

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Appendix for COVID-19

There have been significant changes within our school in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. As a result, we have had to be responsive and adapt to the situation whilst maintaining a stringent overview of safeguarding with some pupils in school and some at home. From 1st September all pupils are expected to return to school. However, we recognise that the virus is still present and may continue to affect normal running.

This appendix sets out the systems and protocols that will continue to be followed in addition to our main safeguarding policy in the event of a local lockdown during this period. This is written in line with changed arrangements in school and follows [advice from government](#)

Status & Review Cycle;
Responsible group:
ratification
Implementation date:
Next Review Date:

Statutory and annual
The Trust with LGB amendments to setting and
March 2020
Ongoing as needed.

Keeping children safe in schools during COVID-19

At the very heart of this appendix, remains the central tenant to our safeguarding approach as a Trust that in line with KCSIE, should any adult within the school community have a safeguarding concern they should act immediately using the agreed procedures as set out in our full child protection and safeguarding policy. The risk of COVID-19 does not override the duty to ensure that children and young people are safe.

As children return to school following this extended absence, we will need to be extremely vigilant to changes in their normal pre-covid behaviours. These may be for a variety of reasons, bereavement, trauma, anxiety as well as exposure to risks within the home, that we might previously have been unaware of. Any concern should be reported using the normal systems and processes. As a multi academy trust - we have ensured that additional support and training for our staff has been put into place through links with KCA to help respond to the increased need we expect to see.

Additional support has been put into place for this interim period in order to support and respond to increased number of concerns as children return to school.

Reporting arrangements

The school arrangements continue in line with our child protection policy.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Heather Francis

head@whiteshill.gloucs.sch.uk

Tel: 01453 762 949

The Deputy DSL is: Juli Middleton

jmiddleton@whiteshill.gloucs.sch.uk

Tel: 01453 762 949

The school's approach ensures the DSL, or a deputy is always contactable while the school is open. All staff will be re-issued with contact details for DSL's during any new school closure and should report any concerns via phone call in line with the current policy. This will ensure that the DSL or Deputy is aware of the concerns and can respond appropriately. DSL and Deputy DSL will ensure they are contactable via phone at all times that they are off-site whilst the school is open.

Staff will continue to follow the Child Protection procedure and advise the safeguarding leads immediately about concerns they have about any child,

whether in school or not. COVID-19 means a need for increased vigilance due to the pressures on services, families and young people, rather than a reduction in our standards.

Children's services may be affected by the impact of the virus on staff and an increased demand for services. Where a child is at risk of significant harm there may be a need to be persistent in referring concerns to the local authority. The arrangements for contacting the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) are: **01452 426565 or by email childrenshelpdesk@gloucestershire.gov.uk**

Further details can be found at [Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Executive](#)

Should a child in the school's view be at risk of significant harm and local agencies are not able to respond, the school will immediately follow the safeguarding children executive escalation procedure, available here: [Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Executive](#)

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which will be done remotely in line with the LA expectations (19.3.2020).

Identifying vulnerability

In the event of a further lockdown local or national as previously schools will need to identify pupils who are classed as vulnerable.

For these pupils we have put these arrangements into place to ensure that regular contact is maintained throughout the period so that safeguarding eye is maintained with these key children:

- Children in Care – individual agreements with carers and Social Worker, mostly involving fortnightly contact
- Children who have previously been Children in Care – individual agreements with carers and SW, mostly involving fortnightly contact
- Children subject to a child protection plan/ Child in Need plan – places offered, if not taken this must be agreed by Social Worker and family. Visits will be undertaken 3 times weekly (to be agreed with Social Worker as to who will undertake these visits).
- Children with an EHCP – Individual Risk Assessments undertaken, and consultations held with parents/carers, SLT and SENCO.
- Children on the edge of social care involvement or pending allocation of a social worker – Where required these children will be offered a place at school or individual contact plans will be agreed

Other children the school considers vulnerable. More children may be added to this group in response to concerns raised with the DSL. Contact arrangements will be agreed with parents/carers, SLT and DSL.

Where appropriate, school will liaise with other agencies involved in their care, including where appropriate their social worker and the Virtual School Head for Children in Care and those who have previously been Children in Care.

In addition, the following groups have specific arrangements around contact and support from the school.

- Children of critical workers who may attend school
- Children at home – remote education plan in place - please see remote education policy for further details of this.

School staff will monitor engagement with pupils working at home carefully. Regular contact will be maintained in the event of a further lockdown to ensure that all pupils are safe. All staff will be alert to lack of engagement which may indicate that a child is at risk. Additional contact will be made in this event and the normal steps put into place for a child missing education will be followed.

The plans in respect of each child in these groups will be reviewed regularly.

Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the Trust Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay. Safeguarding remains the responsibility of **all** staff.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should follow the process outlined in the school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors as per normal arrangements.

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 miss their refresher training. Leaders may choose to use online training to address this if they choose.

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. The DSL will ensure that all staff confirm either by signing a list in school that this has been completed or via email to the DSL that this has been completed.

All new staff will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction within the first 7 days of employment.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to the school, the DSL 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.

Attendance monitoring

From 1st September in line with the guidance from the DfE, all pupils will be expected to return with very few exceptions. Schools will be required to complete normal attendance registers for pupils in school. In the event of a national/local lockdown. The following protocols will be in place.

Where a child is expected and does not arrive the school will follow our attendance procedure and make contact with the family. If contact is not possible by 9:30am, school staff will attempt a range of methods to contact the parent. If the pupil is a vulnerable pupil, the DSL will be informed and if necessary, arrange a home visit by the school or another appropriate agency. A risk assessment will be undertaken to consider manage the implications of COVID-19 alongside other risks perceived to the child. The risk of COVID-19 **does not override** the duty on the school to ensure children and young people are safe.

These arrangements will only be in place for children who have enrolled and are eligible for Emergency Childcare. For all other children because the school is closed, their well-being will be checked on through contact and engagement with the school's remote education processes.

Schools should check carefully with parents/carers with all returning pupils that the emergency contact numbers that are on school records are still current and are able to be used. Additional contact numbers should be added if necessary.

Staff will be aware of increased risk

The pressures on children and their families at this time are significant. There will be heightened awareness of family pressures through being contained in a small area, poverty, and financial or health anxiety. These areas should be considered in the setting of any work for children to undertake at home (including recognising the impact of online learning – see below). Staff will be aware of the mental health of both children and their parents and carers, informing the DSL about any concerns. To support pupils, DGAT have ensured that additional support and training is in place to address this additional need. Training from agencies such as KCA will support staff in meeting this need through highlighting the signs and symptoms that might indicate a child is demonstrating need of additional support from teachers and pastoral teams, whether they are in school or at home.

Incidences of Domestic Abuse are expected to significantly increase during the period of isolation as perpetrators will use this time as a “tool of coercive and controlling behaviour”, and victims and their children are consistently more vulnerable during periods of societal stress [see government guidance](#).

Operation Encompass will continue as normal with notifications being sent to the school's email address (encompass@whiteshill.gloucs.sch.uk). For further information please contact Halah Shams El-Din on 01452 328953 or by email halah.shamsel-din@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Risk online

Young people will be using the internet more during this period, especially as they access some learning activities. Staff will be aware of the signs and signals of cyberbullying and [other risks online](#) and apply the same child-centred safeguarding practices as when children were learning at the school.

- The school continues to ensure appropriate filters and monitors are in place
- Our governing body will review arrangements to ensure they remain appropriate
- The school has taken on board guidance from the [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) on safe remote learning and guidance for [safer working practice](#) from the Safer Recruitment Consortium.
- Staff have discussed the risk that professional boundaries could slip during this exceptional period and been reminded of the school's code of conduct and importance of using school systems to communicate with children and their families.
- Children and young people accessing remote learning receive guidance

Parents and carers have information via the website about keeping children safe online with peers, the school, other education offers they may access and the wider internet community. We have set out the school's approach, including the sites children will be asked to access and set out who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online. Parents have been offered the following links:

- [Internet matters](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [South West Grid for Learning](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Net-aware](#) - for support for parents and carers from the NSPCC
- [Parent info](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- [Thinkuknow](#) - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - advice for parents and carers

Free additional support for staff in responding to online safety issues can be accessed from the [Professionals Online Safety Helpline at the UK Safer Internet Centre](#).

Supporting children not in school

DGAT is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people. Regular contact with pupils at home will be via phone call and email to ensure that staff remain aware of individual pupils needs and concerns so that they are safeguarded. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

These communications with child and parents should include a reminder of how to keep themselves safe online and what to do if they have a concern and how to report it.

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.

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded. Risk Assessment will be completed before any visit.

DGAT schools will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan.

This plan must be reviewed regularly and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate using the normal systems and processes. Where social workers do not respond to the schools concerns the DSL will refer to the LA link to ensure that this is escalated.

The Trust and the school will share this appendix to the normal policy on its website.

DGAT 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. All staff need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Peer on peer Abuse

DGAT recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims. Children who are in school during partial closure will be supervised at all times, to ensure they feel safe.

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 and Safeguarding Policy.

The school will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multi- agency partner required ensuring the safety and security of that young person.

Concerns and actions must be recorded, and appropriate referrals made.

Allegations or concerns about staff

With such different arrangements, young people could be at greater risk of abuse from staff or volunteers. We remind all staff to maintain the view that 'it could happen here' and to immediately report any concern, no matter how small, to the safeguarding team.

Any staff or volunteers from outside our setting will complete an induction to ensure they are aware of the risks and know how to take action if they are concerned.

We have confirmed the arrangements to contact the LADO at the local authority remain unchanged and can be found at [The role of the LADO and the allegations management process - Safeguarding Children in Gloucestershire](#)

If necessary, the school will continue to follow the duty to refer to DBS any adult who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult, and to the Teacher Regulation Agency in line with paragraph 166 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 using the address Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk

New staff or volunteers

New starters must have an induction before starting or on their first morning with the DSL or a deputy. They must read the school child protection policy, the behaviour policy, the whistleblowing policy and the code of conduct. The DSL or deputy will ensure new recruits know who to contact if worried about a child and ensure the new starters are familiar with the child protection procedure.

If staff or volunteers are transferring in from other registered education or childcare settings for a temporary period to support the care of children, we will seek evidence from their setting that:

- the member of staff has completed relevant safeguarding training in line with other similar staff or volunteers,
- they have read Part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and
- where the role involves regulated activity and the appropriate DBS check has been undertaken by that setting, we will undertake a written risk assessment (see flowchart on Page 40 of KCSiE 2020) to determine whether a new DBS would need to be undertaken. It may be in these exceptional times we can rely on the DBS undertaken by their setting.

Our child protection procedures hold strong:

- Volunteers may not be left unsupervised with children until suitable checks have been undertaken. People supervising volunteers must be themselves in regulated activity, able to provide regular, day to day supervision and reasonable in all circumstances to protect the children.
- The school will undertake a written risk assessment on the specific role of each volunteer to decide whether to obtain an enhanced DBS check (with barred list information) for all staff and volunteers new to working in regulated activity in line with [DBS guidance](#).
- When undertaking ID checks on documents for the DBS it is reasonable to [initially check these documents online](#) through a live video link and to accept scanned images

of documents for the purpose of applying for the check. The actual documents will then be checked against the scanned images when the employee or volunteer arrives for their first day.

- The school will update the Single Central Record of all staff and volunteers working in the school, including those from other settings. This will include the risk assessment around the DBS. A record will be kept by SLT of who is working in the school each day.

The DSL will undertake a risk assessment in respect of any new information received, considering how risks will be managed and which staff need to know about the information. This will be recorded on our safeguarding recording system.

Safeguarding Procedures following COVID 19 response and guidance for staff.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-social-distancing-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-social-distancing-in-education-and-childcare-settings

During this time, every school will try to ensure that where possible the DSL or Deputy will be in school. However, should this not be possible because of staff illness or isolation, Keeping Children Safe in Education states...

The designated safeguarding lead or a deputy should always be available to discuss safeguarding concerns.

When you consider your rota's bear this in mind to make your life easier. If your school has no access to a DSL because of sickness, please contact the DCEO who can support.

Should you have a concern about any vulnerable pupil's lack of attendance at school that you are unable to resolve through a social worker - contact the LA link who will support you in escalating.

All DSL/DDSL and pastoral staff must have undertaken the KCA training to ensure that they are well equipped to support the expected increased need.

Increased opportunities for communication with staff team will be put into place during this return to school to ensure that the DSL and DDSL are best able to support pupils at this time.

Support for learners with current Full Child Protection concerns:

- All pupils of children with a social worker are under the DFE guidance should be in school.
- Those pupils whose parents are reluctant for them to be in school should be contacted by the social worker and the education setting to explore the reasons why they would not be in school. This should be resolved where possible.
- Social workers will support schools to identify pupils who you believe would be safer in school. When pupils you believe are not coming into school and are at risk, contact your social worker. If during this period you are struggling to contact social care, the escalation process during this period is through your LA link.
- DSL/Deputy DSL to liaise with all necessary professionals as needed.
- Weekly home visits for those pupils not in school should be assessed as priority. Doorstep contact only at a 2m distance. All learners **MUST** be seen, and visits should follow your risk assessment and PHE guidance on social distancing. A member of the school leadership team plus another staff member from the school to make visits.
- During this period of social distancing, all planned Core, Strategy or review meetings, unless advised otherwise, will be held remotely. GCC provision made this clear to all (19.3.2020).
- Continue to use CPOMS/My Concern/School own system to record and report as per usual school practice.

Support for learners with current Child in Need concerns:

- All pupils of children with a social worker are under the DFE guidance should be in school.

- Telephone contact weekly with those assessed as having some need. Increase this to doorstep visits, following the guidance above (or refer to social care) if concerns arise. Phone contact available to families via the school phone or mobile held by the DSL/ Deputy DSL if off site.
- During this period of social distancing, all planned Core, Strategy or review meetings, unless advised otherwise, will be held remotely. GCC provision made this clear to all (19.3.2020).
- Continue to use CPOMS/My Concern/School own system to record and report as per usual school practice.

Any other vulnerable pupils including EHCP pupils

- Leaders to make a decision as to who is considered to be vulnerable using their local information. Advice can be sought if needed.
- DSL to check in according to perceived need.
- All pupils with an EHCP can continue to attend if the LA risk assessment completed with the parental views allows this. Please note that your normal offer can be changed to keep them in school, if they are safe. If you need additional support to achieve this, please contact your LA link, who may be able to source additional specialist staff and resources from across the county to help.
- Pupils with significant health issues who you are unable to keep safe in school because trained staff are ill or in self-isolation, please discuss with their social worker or lead professional in DCYS to agree course of action. If no allocated worker please contact the Disabled Children's duty worker on 01452 425022 or by email through dycspduty@gloucsetershire.gov.uk

PLEASE NOTE:

- All support of families during this time to be recorded using appropriate agreed systems where necessary.
- DSL/Deputy DSL to be available for safeguarding escalation. School mobile numbers to be shared with families.
- Safeguarding in Education Team are available for general enquiries. The contact details are gsep@gloucestershire.gov.uk or 01452 426221.
- Only school phones are to be used to contact families. Should there be no alternative other than a personal mobile for communication with a family, then the personal number MUST be withheld. Staff personal phone numbers are not to be shared.
- All information in relation to pupil details, social care contacts etc will be stored by the DSL/Deputy DSL in line with GDPR guidance.
- Following any visit that raises concern the DSL will report to the relevant professionals who may carry out unscheduled visits to the home.
- Should the school have to close because of insufficient staff numbers, or you have closed because of insufficient numbers, please ensure that you have an ongoing oversight of all vulnerable pupils in your school. Access to a DSL /Deputy DSL so that these people can receive MASH and Operation Encompass enquiries.

This is a dynamic document that will be updated in line with guidance from DSL, Department for Education and Government as needed.

Actions

- DSLs to ensure that vulnerable pupil list is kept up to date in case of local lockdown.
- File of all social worker numbers associated with all caseloads to be collated – DSL/Family Support
- Allocation of pupils to DSL and Deputy DSL along with contact sheets.
- Please make sure that social workers can contact you through your usual communication methods.
- Regular updated pastoral updates to ensure that as pupils return to school all are aware of presenting risks and concerns.

DGAT COVID-19 Interim Appendix