

Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

Abbey View School

Contents

Important contacts	2
1. Scope and definitions.....	3
2. Core safeguarding principles.....	3
3. Reporting concerns	3
4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements	3
5. Working with other agencies	4
6. Monitoring attendance.....	4
7. Peer-on-peer abuse	4
8. Concerns about a staff member or volunteer	4
9. Support for children who aren't vulnerable but where we have concerns	4
10. Safeguarding for children not attending school	5
11. Online safety.....	5
12. Mental health	6
13. Staff recruitment, training and induction.....	6
14. Children attending other settings	7
15. Monitoring arrangements	7
16. Links with other policies	7

Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Daniel Hartley	Daniel.Hartley@abbey-view.org.uk
Deputy DSL	Clair Hedges Matt Richards	Clair.Hedges@abbey-view.org.uk Matthew.Richards@abbey-view.org.uk
Principal	Daniel Hartley	Daniel.Hartley@abbey-view.org.uk
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Nigel Hatten	Nigel.Hatten@gloucestershire.gov.uk
Chair of governors	Sara Chandler	office@abbey-view.org.uk

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from our local safeguarding partners and Gloucestershire County Council.

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance [Coronavirus: safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers](#), and should be read in conjunction with that policy.

Unless covered here, our normal child protection policy continues to apply.

The Department for Education's (DfE's) definition of vulnerable children includes those who:

- Have a social worker, including children:
 - With a child protection plan
 - Assessed as being in need
 - Looked after by the local authority
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

2. Core safeguarding principles

We will still have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

Although we are operating in a different way to normal, we are still following these important safeguarding principles:

- The best interests of children must come first
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should continue to act on it immediately
- A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy will be available at all times (see section 4 for details of our arrangements) when the school is open to students.
- It's essential that unsuitable people don't enter the school workforce or gain access to children
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online

3. Reporting concerns

All staff and volunteers must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this.

As a reminder, all staff should continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements

We will have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site whenever students are present. Details of all important contacts are listed in the [important contacts](#) section at the start of this addendum.

We will keep all school staff who are working in school informed by email as to who will be the DSL (or deputy) when the school is open to students. At all other times please email Daniel Hartley in the first instance with any concerns unless directed elsewhere by him via email.

We will ensure that DSLs (and deputies), wherever their location, know who the most vulnerable children in our school are.

5. Working with other agencies

We will continue to work with children's social care, and with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

- Our local safeguarding partners
- The local authority about children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need

6. Monitoring attendance

As most children will not be attending school during this period of school closure, we will not be completing our usual attendance registers or following our usual procedures to follow up on non-attendance.

The exception to this is where any child we expect to attend school during the closure doesn't attend, or stops attending. In these cases we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, by phone
- Notify their social worker, where they have one

We are using the Department for Education's daily online attendance form to keep an accurate record of who is attending school.

We will make arrangements with parents and carers to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details, and additional contact details where possible.

7. Peer-on-peer abuse

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education when managing reports and supporting victims of peer-on-peer abuse.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately.

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8. Concerns about a staff member or volunteer

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately.

We will continue to refer adults who have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

We will continue to refer potential cases of teacher misconduct to the Teaching Regulation Agency. We will do this using the email address Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

9. Support for children who aren't 'vulnerable' but where we have concerns

We have the option to offer places in school to children who don't meet the Department for Education's definition of 'vulnerable' but who we have safeguarding concerns about. We will work with parents/carers to do this.

If these children will not be attending school, we will put a contact plan in place, as explained in section 10.1 below.

10. Safeguarding for children not attending school

10.1 Contact plans

We have contact plans for children with a social worker and children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where:

- They won't be attending school (for example where the school, parent/carer and social worker, if relevant, have decided together that this wouldn't be in the child's best interests); or
- They would usually attend but have to self-isolate

These plans set out:

- How often the school will make contact
- Which staff member(s) will make contact
- How they will make contact

If we can't make contact, we will contact children's social care for advice.

10.2 Safeguarding all children

Staff are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children at greater risk.

Staff and volunteers will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on pupils' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately. In particular, children are likely to be spending more time online (see section 11 below).

11. Online safety

11.1 In school

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school.

11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing policies and additional support/information has been given to staff.

Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in section 3 of this addendum.

We will make sure children know how to report any concerns they have back to our school, and signpost them to other sources of support too.

11.3 Working with parents and carers

We will make sure parents and carers:

- Are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online
- Know what our school is asking children to do online, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school

- Are aware that they should only use reputable online companies or tutors if they wish to supplement the remote teaching and resources our school provides
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online

This is achieved by emailing parents/carers where possible information and also sending a weekly text to parents/carers encouraging them to contact the school if they have any worries, concern

12. Mental health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for student mental health for all students.

We will also signpost all students, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time.

When setting expectations for students learning remotely and not attending school, teachers will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health.

13. Staff recruitment, training and induction

13.1 Recruiting new staff and volunteers

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that adults and volunteers who work in our school are safe to work with children.

We will continue to follow our safer recruitment procedures, and part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

In urgent cases, when validating proof of identity documents to apply for a DBS check, we will initially accept verification of scanned documents via online video link, rather than being in physical possession of the original documents. This approach is in line with revised guidance from the DBS.

New staff must still present the original documents when they first attend work at our school.

We will continue to do our usual checks on new volunteers, and do risk assessments to decide whether volunteers who are not in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with paragraphs 167-172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

13.2 Staff 'on loan' from other schools

We will not be using staff from other schools.

13.3 Safeguarding induction and training

We will make sure staff and volunteers are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements.

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive:

- A safeguarding induction
- A copy of our children protection policy (and this addendum)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1

We will decide on a case-by-case basis what level of safeguarding induction staff on loan need. In most cases, this will be:

- A copy of our child protection policy and this addendum
- Confirmation of local processes
- Confirmation of DSL arrangements

13.4 Keeping records of who's on site

We will keep a record of which staff are on site each day, and that appropriate checks have been carried out for them.

We will continue to keep our single central record up to date.

14. Children attending other settings

Students will only be attending Abbey view or their mainstream school.

15. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated, when required. At every update, it will be approved by the Principal and the Governing Body.

16. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding policy
- Staff Conduct
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy