

Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

Gatten and Lake Primary School



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Approved by:

Rob Woodley-Thompson on
behalf of FGB

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Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Rebecca Day	07825 580598
Deputy DSL	Jayne Poulton Jon Kirby	07814271710 07977119595
Headteacher	Rebecca Day	07825 580598
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Amanda Sheen	01983 823723
Chair of governors	Rob Woodley-Thompson	07949 918400

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from our 3 local safeguarding partners [4 LSCB] and local authority (LA) [Isle of Wight].

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)
- 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.

If working in school the current 'To Note' system still applies at all times. You can complete 'To Notes' from home too, if you live in the locality and see something when you are on your essential travel or children in the community etc... but following this, a verbal account of the 'To Note' should be relayed immediately to Rebecca Day (DSL) via the telephone. If this is an immediate safeguarding concern, of course normal procedures of calling the police apply or calling the MASH team phone number.

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 aim to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site frequently, wherever possible, in line with the rotas of the school and working across schools. Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum. The requirement is to have a DSL contactable which is ALWAYS the case.

If our DSL (or deputy) can't be in school, they can be contacted remotely by: [Rebecca Day – 07825 580598 or 07399 815187 Jayne Poulton – 07814271710 Jon Kirby - 07977119595].

We will keep all school staff and volunteers informed by email / via the school diary to who will be the DSL (or deputy) on any given day, and how to contact them.

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

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding. This will be Rebecca Day You can contact them by: 07825 580598

The senior leader will be responsible for liaising with the off-site DSL (or deputy) to make sure they (the senior leader) can:

- Identify the most vulnerable children in school
- Update and manage access to child protection files, where necessary
- Liaise with children's social workers where they need access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments

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 3 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

The following guidance is currently in place:

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 making phone calls with them, using a variety of numbers to call from,
- 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. Regular phone calls are made. If not contactable use another phone source, if not contactable phone social worker or do a letter drop.

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.

Reinforce with children through teaching platforms about online safety. Include online safety as one of the teaching tasks after the 'Easter break' to ensure the children remember the rules about online working and safety.

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. These children are, for example, children who have previously had a social worker, or who haven't met the threshold for a referral but where staff have raised concerns. Those who have school or therapy intervention or who are on the schools 'radar' for needing additional support.

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

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
- › DSL and DDSL have these documents open and accessible at all times. All calls are recorded immediately after being made, so there is no duplication. All actions are in a different colour indicating the completion / further action needed. A clear system is in place and is currently working well. But is reviewed daily by the DSL/DDSL.
- › Weekly documents are then sent to the social worker detailing the contact made and outcomes etc.. as well as regular emails.

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them on an at weekly basis, but most frequently daily in our communication debrief.

If we can't make contact with parents /carers and we feel this is extremely important, we will be contacting children's social care or the police.

10.2 Safeguarding all children

Staff and volunteers 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.

Eddie Sherwin and Jon Kirby are both competent IT users and can support parents and carers accessing systems, etc, via telephone communication.

IT issues are also dealt with through the IT operator – Dataswift, especially in light of conference calls etc, through Microsoft teams, set up for meetings such as the FGB, etc...

If IT staff are unavailable, our contingency plan is IT support, from another school (Wroxall) or the LA.

Teacher will ensure activity provision for online safety takes place the week after the Easter break, so we are still reinforcing this message with the children and families through the 'online learning time'.

11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff behaviour policy/code of conduct/IT acceptable use policies.

Teachers will access technology daily to set online home-school learning tasks through the online platforms of Class DoJo and Purple Mash. Class DoJo has a messaging function that does not give away personal information and is accessed only through a staff, parent or child login. Messages will remain professional at all times. Any concerns through this messaging system will be reported immediately to the Headteacher and appropriate DSL/DDSL channels.

If staff are using videos to share with children, they are done so, with minimal background information to protect family identity, so ideally with blank wall spaces, etc... This protects the staff member and their family.

In no cases, should inappropriate information, be shared through this platform and safeguarding should be at the forefront of everyone's mind.

An appropriate use of video, may be to read a chapter of a book, model using apparatus how to solve a maths problem, etc.. with minimal background distraction.

Inappropriate use would include giving information about your family, giving a diary of your day, information about where you live, etc....

If phoning pupils to investigate why they are not doing work, or for welfare checks, this should be from the school telephone, the school mobile – when you have access to it, or by blocking your number through 141 – testing this works from your device first. This should NEVER be from your home phone number or personal mobile phone.

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

12. Mental health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. Wendy has sent packs to those children she works with in therapy sessions and contact information.

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

When setting expectations for pupils 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 aren't 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 assess the risks of staff 'on loan' working in our school, and seek assurance from the 'loaning' school that staff have had the appropriate checks. The school business manager, Andy Creed, will be responsible for these checks or risk assessments, which will be signed off by the Headteacher, Rebecca Day.

We will also use the DBS Update Service, where these staff have signed up to it, to check for any new information.

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 safeguarding and 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 safeguarding and 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 and volunteers 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.

We will use the electronic school sign in system to log:

- Everyone working or volunteering in our school each day, including staff 'on loan'

The SBM will keep an updated log of any staff 'on loan' to detail risk assessments in addition to the update of the Single Central Record.

- Details of any risk assessments carried out on staff and volunteers on loan from elsewhere

14. Children attending other settings

Where children are temporarily required to attend another setting, we will make sure the receiving school is provided with any relevant welfare and child protection information.

Wherever possible, our DSL (or deputy) and/or special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) will share, as applicable:

- The reason(s) why the child is considered vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them
- The child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or personal education plan
- Details of the child's social worker
- Details of the virtual school head

Where the DSL, deputy or SENCO can't share this information, the senior leader(s) identified in section 4 will do this.

We will share this information before the child arrives as far as is possible, and otherwise as soon as possible afterwards.

15. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 3-4 weeks by Rebecca day – Headteacher. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

16. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection policy
- Staff Code of conduct and school handbook
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy
- Peer on Peer abuse policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Anti-bullying policy