



St White's Primary School

Covid Policy
Child Protection and Safeguarding annex

Date of Review: June 2020
Interim Review and Update March 2021

Date of Next Review: June 2021

Signed,
Chair of Governors:

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Child Protection Annex for Reopening

Child protection during the COVID-19 measures

The way schools and colleges are currently operating in response to coronavirus (COVID-19) is fundamentally different to business as usual. From 8th March, schools have been asked to welcome back all children unless they are isolating due to having/being in contact with a positive Covid case. This may either be within their family/contacts or in response to school having to close a bubble.

This Annex to our Child Protection policy sets out details of our safeguarding arrangements for:

Version control and dissemination

This is available on the school website and is made available to staff by email. Concerns will continue to be recorded using My Concern.

Safeguarding priority

During these challenging times, the safeguarding of all children at our school – whether they are currently at home or in attendance – continues to be our priority. The following fundamental safeguarding principles remain the same:

- the best interests of children continue to come first
- if anyone in our school has a safeguarding concern, they will act immediately
- a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy DSL will always be available
- no unsuitable people will be allowed to gain access to children
- children should continue to be protected when they are online.

Current school position

From 8th March, St White's Primary School is open to all pupils unless isolating in line with government expectations.

Safeguarding partners' advice

We continue to work closely with our three safeguarding partners, and we will ensure this annex is consistent with their advice. This will include expectations for supporting children with education, health and care plans (EHCPs), the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need. The current advice is below.

We adhere to the DfE advice outlined in https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/guidance-for-schools-coronavirus-covid-19?utm_source=1%20March%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19

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](#)

Roles and responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities for safeguarding in our school remain in line with our Child Protection Policy.

If possible, our DSL and at least one deputy DSL will be available on site during the school day. Where this is not possible, for example if a bubble has to close, we will:

- have a trained DSL or deputy DSL available by phone and/or online video (see staff information sheet); or
- ensure we have access to a trained DSL or deputy DSL from another school or college by phone and/or online video. (Arrangement in place with Soudley School – see staff information sheet)

Where our DSL or a deputy DSL cannot be on site, then in addition to one of the above options we will also ensure a senior leader from the school takes responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) for child protection are Clare Tilling and Erica Fearn

Deputy designated lead Roz Hewitt

Deputy designated lead Fran Cinderey

Deputy designated lead Ione Haroun

Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with 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.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend school, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. Where a parent does

not want their child to attend school, and their child is considered vulnerable, we will discuss this with the social worker and explore the reasons for this directly with the parent. Where parents are concerned about the risk of their child contracting Covid 19, a senior leader from the school and/or the social worker will discuss these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

We will encourage our vulnerable children to return to learn at school, if they are not already here.

We will continue to work with children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

If these children are isolating, the school will maintain daily contact through remote learning. If no contact is made it will follow its procedure – daily emails from the teacher followed by SLT arranging contact by the end of the week including referring on to other agencies as home visits will not be possible due to isolation risk.

Increased vulnerability or risk

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Staff will be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home. Where we are providing for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we will ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

Our staff and volunteers will be aware of the mental health of [children](#) and their [parents and carers](#) and will contact the DSL or a deputy if they have any concerns.

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 addresses.

The school will always follow up on Operation Encompass emails by adding them to My Concern and arranging for monitoring the family to be contacted on the following day to ensure that the children are safeguarded.

Attendance

The school will follow government guidance on attendance. As long as it is required, it will complete the online attendance register for the DfE and will follow its own attendance procedures.

Where a child is expected but does not arrive at school, we will follow our attendance procedure and attempt to contact the family. If contact cannot be made, the DSL or a deputy DSL will be informed.

The DSL or a deputy will attempt to contact the parents through various methods, such as email and telephone or by contacting a relative on their contact list in the first instance. If contact cannot be made or if the DSL or a deputy DSL deems it necessary, we will consider undertaking a home

visit or ask an appropriate agency to do so. A risk assessment will be carried out before any such visit is made to ensure that neither staff nor the family are put at risk.

Attendance of vulnerable children

We will work closely with the social workers of vulnerable children to agree with parents/carers whether children in need or children on child protection plans should be attending school. School staff will then follow up on any pupil that we were expecting to attend, who does not.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or stops attending school, we will notify their social worker.

Additional Steps to support with Attendance.

To support the above, we will, when communicating with parents/carers, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available. These will be recorded on the child's data sheet.

Reporting concerns about children or staff

The importance of all staff and volunteers acting immediately on any safeguarding concerns remains. Staff and volunteers will continue to follow our Child Protection procedures, available at <https://www.st-whites.gloucs.sch.uk/web/policies/336096> and advise the DSL of any concerns they have about any child, including those who are not attending school. This will continue to be done through a referral on My Concern, which can be accessed remotely, and in person or via the phone in school for staff who are in. DSLs will confirm by email that they have received any new concerns raised by other members of staff.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their My Concern from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This will ensure that the concern is received.

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

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 2019 using the address

Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk

The varied arrangements in place as a result of the COVID-19 measures do not reduce the risks that children may face from staff or volunteers. As such, it remains extremely important that any allegations of abuse made against staff or volunteers attending our school are dealt with thoroughly and efficiently and in accordance with our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and Code of Conduct Policy and Whistleblowing Policy available at <https://www.st-whites.gloucs.sch.uk/web/policies/336096>

Staff training and induction

All staff who need safeguarding training have received it 'virtually' including whole school, Level 3 for DSLs and Safer Recruitment.

The Safeguarding Audit has been successfully completed and the school is compliant with all advice and procedures.

When new staff are recruited or volunteers join us, they will receive a safeguarding induction in accordance with our Child Protection Policy as normal.

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, we will continue to follow our Safer Recruitment policy.

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.

For volunteers we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to engage in regulated activity.

It is essential from a safeguarding perspective that we are aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers are on our school site and that the appropriate checks have been carried out on those individuals. We will continue to maintain our single central record (SCR) during these measures to ensure we have this awareness.

Peer on peer abuse

We recognise that children can abuse their peers and our staff are clear about the school's policy and procedures regarding peer on peer abuse. All peer on peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. We also recognise that abuse can still occur during a school closure or partial closure and between those children who do attend the school site during these measures.

Our staff will remain vigilant to the [signs of peer-on-peer abuse](#) and will follow the process set out in our Child Protection Policy, which can be accessed on our web site.

Online safety

It is likely that children will be using the internet and engaging with social media far more during this time if they continue to learn at home due to isolation regulations. Our staff are aware of the signs of cyberbullying and other online risks and our filtering and monitoring software remains in use during this time to safeguarding and support children.

Our staff will follow the process for online safety set out in our Child Protection Policy and Acceptable Use Policy. We have also reminded parents about on-line safety and information is available on our website.

Parents/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. Parents/carers are signposted to the following Internet Support Sites:

- [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 careers 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](#).

Staff who interact with children online will continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. If a staff member is concerned about a child, that staff member will follow the approach set out in this annex and report that concern to the DSL or to a deputy DSL.

New children at the school

Children may join our school from other settings. When they do, we will seek from those settings the relevant welfare and child protection information. This is relevant for all children that join us, but it will be especially important where children are vulnerable.

For vulnerable children we will ensure we understand the reasons for the vulnerability and any arrangements in place to support them. As a minimum we will seek access to that child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or, for looked-after children, their personal education plan and know who the child's social worker (and, for looked-after children, who the responsible VSH is).

Ideally, this will happen before a child arrives but where that is not possible it will happen as soon afterwards as is reasonably practicable.

Any exchanges of information will ideally happen at DSL (or deputy) level, and likewise between special educational needs co-ordinators/named individual with oversight of SEN provision for children with EHC plans. However, it is acknowledged this may not always be possible. Where this is the case our school senior leaders will take responsibility.

The DSL will undertake a risk assessment based on the information received, considering how risks will be managed and which staff need to know the information.

Supporting children not in school

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive additional pastoral support in school, they will ensure that a communication plan is in place to support that child. Details of that plan will be recorded in the safeguarding file for that child. It will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains current during these measures.

The school has grouped all children into categories of need and will contact all regularly by phone and by email. Phone contact will be prioritised with the most vulnerable contacted weekly, and all

others contacted on a rota with the aim that every family should receive a phone call at least fortnightly.

Staff Information Sheet for use during Covid 19 Emergency opening

Designated Safeguarding Leads

If you have any concerns about any children or adults in school, you must follow normal safeguarding procedures and contact the school's DSL. There will always be a DSL on site during the time that children are on site, or available by phone. One of the DSLs will always be on site and staff should ring the office on 201, HT on 204 or FSW on 206.

In the very unlikely event that all DSLs are unwell, and therefore unavailable for offering guidance and assistance, the school has a reciprocal arrangement with Soudley school and you can call them to speak to their DSL.

Fire Alarm

In the case of a fire alarm, teachers, or the most senior member of staff caring for a group of children is the fire marshal. They will send the children out of the building by the nearest available fire exit (usually the classroom external door) and sweep the area to ensure that no one is left behind. They will then escort the children to the MUGA where they will line up underneath the class sign for the class where they were learning.

The most senior member of St White's staff will be responsible for communicating with the fire brigade.

The most senior member of St White's administration staff will be responsible for records of who should be in the building so that there can be an accurate account given to the Fire Brigade.

Lock Down

The lock down alarm is a single blast repeated three times. If you hear this sound, you must lock all the doors of your classroom, both internal, cloakroom and external, and draw down the blinds.

You will be told that the lock down is over by two blasts of the alarm.

If you are outside the building and hear the alarm, you must return to the building in the way that you left and lock the door behind you. The office will communicate with you via walkie-talkie if the threat is inside the building and you should remain outside.

If all the learning areas in the school are in use, the children in the break out areas should return to class. Children in the library should join Swift class (because there is clear glass in their internal door so they will be able to see you. This damages the class bubbles but will safeguard the children from a more immediate danger. While together in the class, as much distance between the groups as possible should be maintained.