



**COVID-19 period school arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at  
Denton Community College (in the event of a full or partial closure)**

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## 1) Context

From 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020 parents/carers were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response - who absolutely needed to attend.

Schools and all childcare providers were asked to provide care for a limited number of children - children who were vulnerable, and children whose parents were critical to the COVID-19 response and who could not be safely cared for at home.

Since the start of the Autumn Term 2020, all students have returned to school. This additional annex to the Safeguarding Policy will be relevant to any period of interrupted education due to COVID-19 and where another lockdown/partial lockdown becomes necessary.

## 2) Key contacts

All safeguarding concerns should be sent to the specially created safeguarding address at:

[dsl@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk](mailto:dsl@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk)

Role	Name	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Laura Donbavand (Child Protection Officer)	<a href="mailto:l.donbavand@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk">l.donbavand@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk</a>
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Katherine Kilbane (Assistant Headteacher)	<a href="mailto:k.kilbane@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk">k.kilbane@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk</a>
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	James Haslam (Assistant Headteacher)	<a href="mailto:j.haslam@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk">j.haslam@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk</a>
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Samantha Graham (Assistant Headteacher)	<a href="mailto:s.graham@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk">s.graham@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk</a>
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Steve Nixon (Assistant Headteacher)	<a href="mailto:s.nixon@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk">s.nixon@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk</a>
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Yvette Cooper (Assistant Headteacher)	<a href="mailto:y.cooper@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk">y.cooper@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk</a>
LAC Coordinator	Janice Griffiths (Learning Support Officer)	<a href="mailto:j.griffiths@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk">j.griffiths@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk</a>
Headteacher	Greg Rule	<a href="mailto:g.rule@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk">g.rule@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk</a>

### **3) Vulnerable children**

During the period of COVID- 19, the monitoring of and the facilitation of support for vulnerable students is being led by Katherine Kilbane (Assistant Headteacher) and Laura Donbavand (Child Protection Officer).

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans and any other young person identified as being of concern.

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, Child In Need.

Those with an EHC plan are risk-assessed in consultation with the Local Authority and parents/carers in order to help decide/inform (should a another lockdown/partial lockdown or prolonged period off school becomes necessary), whether they need to continue to be offered a school or college place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC plans and Social Workers can safely remain at home. However, we would actively encourage their attendance in school in any future full or partial lockdown situation.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself is not the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Leads and Deputies, know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place in school to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

Denton Community College will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers and the local authority virtual school head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

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 increased risk and if coming to school goes against national guidance on shielding (if this is issued at anytime in the future). In circumstances where a parent/carer does not want to bring their child to school, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and Denton Community College will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent and monitor the well-being of the child in a different way. However, during another lockdown/partial lockdown or prolonged period off school (if it becomes necessary and isn't COVID illness related where absence from school is essential/mandated for public health reasons) and where the child is in a safe environment and in the care of a competent adult, the child should remain at home, unless sending into school is a last resort. This is in line with social distancing instructions from the government and helps to protect young people and school staff.

Where parents/carers are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, Denton Community College or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England and the Department for Education.

#### **Attendance monitoring during a period of full or partial closure**

Denton Community College and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – Denton Community College will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. Denton Community College will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend.

To support the above, Denton Community College will, when communicating with parents and carers, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, Denton Community College will notify their social worker and be in regular contact with the social worker to ensure that the welfare of the child is checked regularly.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead**

Denton Community College has a number of Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and Deputy DSLs. Please see the contacts list in Section 2 of this document.

On each day during the COVID-19 period and when the school is open, a number of trained DSLs or Deputy DSLs are available on site. During a further period of lockdown/partial lockdown and where it is not possible to have multiple DSLs and Deputy DSLs on site, a trained DSL or Deputy DSL will either be on site or will be available to be contacted via the DSL email address: [dsl@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk](mailto:dsl@dentoncommunitycollege.org.uk) and on their personal work email address as listed in Section 2. These email accounts are checked regularly throughout the day. In an emergency, the safeguarding team can be contacted on the telephone numbers listed.

The role of the DSLs and Deputy DSLs might include updating and managing access to child protection online management systems, CPOMS and liaising with the offsite DSLs or Deputies and as required liaising with social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school or college.

It is important that all Denton Community College staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL or Deputy DSL. On each day of opening, the staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to contact them.

The DSL and Deputy DSLs will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

### **Reporting a concern**

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school's Safeguarding Policy, this includes making a report via the agreed school system i.e. CPOMS etc, which can be done remotely if required and by contacting a member of the safeguarding team when necessary.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access electronic systems from home, they should call a member of the safeguarding team to discuss the matter. This will ensure that the concern is received. During the COVID-19 period, it is advised that Katherine Kilbane or Laura Donbavand are contacted in the first instance.

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay and where possible, in person.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concern to the Headteacher or other senior leader. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the Headteacher.

Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors: Mel West.

### **Safeguarding Training and induction**

DSL training has recently been completed for all key safeguarding staff. In addition, in September 2020, all Heads of Year and the SENCO completed the DSL training delivered by the LADO.

If COVID-19 closure measures are put in place at any time, should a DSL or Deputy DSL need refresher training during this period, they will continue to be classed as a trained DSL or Deputy DSL until training can be facilitated.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020). The DSLs/Deputy DSLs 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 Denton Community College, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our school, we will take into account any 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.

### **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. If recruiting new staff during any future full or partial closure, Denton Community College will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for our setting, 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 to minimise the need for face-to-face contact.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our school, we 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

Where Denton Community College utilises volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 164 to 171 of KCSIE. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Denton Community College 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.

Denton Community College will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 163 of KCSIE and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct advice for making a referral.

Whilst acknowledging the challenges posed by the current period, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that school is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school or college, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, Denton Community College will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 164 to 171 in KCSIE.

### **Online safety in schools and colleges**

Denton Community College will provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system.

Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

### **Children and online safety away from school and college**

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the existing Safeguarding Policy and where appropriate referrals should be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

Denton Community College will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- No 1:1s, groups only
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background
- Staff must only use platforms specified by senior managers and approved by our IT network manager / provider to communicate with pupils
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held

### **Supporting children not in school**

Denton Community College is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children and young people.

Where the DSL/Deputy DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support during a future period of full or partial closure and 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.

Details of this plan must be recorded on school safeguarding systems i.e CPOMS, as should a record of any contact made. A COVID-19 period monitoring and tracking system has been set up by school and is ensuring that all vulnerable people are communicated with regularly and any concerns trigger an EWS/SW/HE/ Police or welfare check response.

The communication plans may include; remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods will be considered and recorded.

Denton Community College and its DSLs/Deputy DSLs will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication systems.

These measures will be reviewed regularly and where concerns arise, the DSLs/Deputy DSLs will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The school has shared safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages. These will be updated/added to when necessary.

Denton Community College recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and that current circumstances relating to COVID-19 can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Teachers at Denton Community College will be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

### **Supporting children in school**

Denton Community College is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students.

Denton Community College will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

Denton Community College has referred to and will continue to refer to Government guidance for education and childcare settings 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.

Denton Community College will ensure that if we are required in the future to operate a partial provision/care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we will ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

Where Denton Community College has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our DSLs/Deputy DSLs or first aiders – we will discuss these concerns immediately with the chair of governors and senior leaders and make any alternative arrangements that may be necessary to continue to ensure the safety of our community.

### **Peer on Peer Abuse**

Denton Community College recognises that during any future full or partial closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where 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 the Safeguarding Policy.

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

Concerns and actions must be recorded on CPOMS and appropriate referrals made.