



# St John's Church of England Academy

## Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust

### Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Appendix

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From 23rd March 2020 parents 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 need to attend.

Schools and all childcare providers were asked to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable, including those with a social worker, those with an Educational Health Care plan, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

From 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020, schools are being asked to open to a wider number of children. It is imperative that the daily running of the schools during this time should have at the centre of its organisation the safety and wellbeing of all children within their community.

This additional Appendix of DGAT's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy details the Trust's individual safeguarding arrangements during this exceptional period. This document is an interim document and will be amended and updated throughout this period as the situation changes.

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

Statutory and annual  
The Trust with LGB amendments to setting and ratification  
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.

- Concerns about a child or a disclosure should be discussed with the DSL who will help decide whether a referral to children's social care, early help or other support is appropriate in accordance with Gloucestershire's Safeguarding Partners Levels of Need document.
- If a referral is needed then the DSL should usually make it. However, anyone can make a referral and if for any reason a staff member thinks a referral is appropriate and one hasn't been made they can and should consider making a referral themselves.
- The child (subject to their age and understanding) and the parents will be told that a referral is being made, unless to do so would increase the risk to the child.
- If after a referral the child's situation does not appear to be improving the designated safeguarding lead (or the person that made the referral) should press for re-consideration to ensure their concerns have been addressed, and most importantly the child's situation improves.
- If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm a referral should be made to children's social care and/or the police immediately. Anybody can make a referral.
- Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible.

Click here for the link to Gloucestershire Children's Safeguarding Board Process for further information <http://www.gscb.org.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=68070&p=0>

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. (insert school's own arrangements).

### Designated Safeguarding Lead

During this time the DSL: Mrs Joanne Peaper  
Deputy DSL's: Mrs Pam Howell

As schools open more widely to pupils it is expected that a DSL or Deputy will be available on site. There may be exceptional cases where this is not always possible and KCSIE is clear that this does not have to be in person if not possible, but available.

If all of your DSL/DDSL are self-isolating, please contact the DCEO to support you with this. It is important that all staff have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day staff on site will be made aware of that person is and how to speak to them.

DSL and Deputies should continue to provide support to teachers and pastoral staff to ensure that contact is maintained with children (and their families) who are not yet returning to school. Where possible, staff should try to speak directly to children to help identify concerns. Schools should wherever possible make calls from school using school devices. Should staff have to use personal phones to make calls, they must ensure that they have withheld their personal number.

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).

### **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.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot have a direct conversation with the DSL or a Deputy DSL, they should email them to ensure that the concern is received.

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

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**

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID 19 virus.

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 (2019). 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.

Where new staff are recruited they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

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.

## **Vulnerable children**

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.

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. 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. DGAT HT's and social workers will agree with parents/carers for children who are defined as vulnerable (CIN, CP, LAC etc) whether their child will be attending, using the LA risk assessment process.

Guidance states that unless a pupil fits the significant underlying health advice they **should** be in school.

All pupils with a medical EHCP can continue to attend if the LA risk assessment completed with parental views allows this. Please note that your normal IEP actions and provision can be changed if resources prohibit normal provision. 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.

For schools with pupils with significant health issues who are unable to keep them 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](mailto:dycspduty@gloucsetershire.gov.uk)

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies) will continue to collate an up to date list of our most vulnerable children and will ensure provision is offered to them whilst the school remains in partial closure.

DGAT schools 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.

## **Children moving schools and colleges**

Any school during this period, for whom children normally on their school roll, should ensure that all relevant welfare and child protection information is shared with the receiving setting, to best support the child. This is especially important if the child is designated as

vulnerable. At a minimum the receiving school should have had access to the child's EHC, CP plan or PEP. They should know who the key professionals are supporting the pupil and carers. Exchange of information will have happened at DSL level.

Similarly, DGAT schools who have received pupils into their school during this time should have the same expectations of the home school DSL and Leaders. Should the relevant information not have been shared, the DSL should chase to ascertain this key information.

DGAT COVID-19 Interim Appendix

## **Attendance monitoring**

From 1<sup>st</sup> June, schools will be required to complete normal attendance registers for pupils in school as well as continuing to complete the DFE attendance return.

Schools should follow up non-attendance to all pupils of critical care workers, who are expected to be in school, vulnerable pupils and those pupils who have been invited into school because the school is now open to them, to explore their reasons for not being in school. In the case of vulnerable pupils who have social workers working with them, non-attendance will be followed up in consultation with our social work and local authority partners.

There is no legislation in place currently to pursue this with parents should they decide to keep their child at home. Coronavirus Act 2020 has relaxed the law, so that a parent of a child of compulsory age is not guilty of an offence on account of a child's failure to attend regularly at the school at which the child is registered. (Section 444 of the Education Act 1986).

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, we will notify their social worker. Where appropriate the HT should keep in touch with the family. If this is not responded to, please refer to your LA link contact who will support you with escalating this further.

Schools should check carefully with parents/carers with 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. Contact numbers should not include someone who falls into the vulnerable group, such as a grandparent over the age of 70.

## **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, DGAT will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) (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.

DGAT 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. Full details can be found at paragraph 163 of KCSIE.

We will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 of KCSIE and the TRA's 'Teacher misconduct advice for making a referral.

During the COVID-19 period all referrals will be made by emailing [Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto:Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk)

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current National emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any 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, DGAT will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

It is an expectation that DSL and DDSL will do what they can to keep up to date with safeguarding developments, via safeguarding networks, newsletter and professional advice groups. Key changes and in protocols will continue to be communicated to all within the community so that all staff are confident in adaptation to practice during this period.

### **Supporting children in school**

DGAT is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils.

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

DGAT will refer to the 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 COVID19.

DGAT will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

Where DGAT has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – they are discussed immediately with the trust.

DGAT will ensure that where we care for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site, appropriate support is in place for them.

### **Mental Health**

All staff within the Trust understand that the current pandemic will potentially cause negative experiences and distressing life events can affect the mental health of both children and their parents. 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.

For all pupils' additional sessions will be planned on return to school to address key concepts that are expected to be a need and the curriculum will be adapted to address this need.

## **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 from 1<sup>st</sup> June will be via (insert own arrangements) 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.

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

DGAT will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system. DGAT schools will ensure that provision is in place for IT filter contingency provision is in place.

The UK council for Internet Safety provides for leaders including LGB to assure themselves that any new arrangements continue to effectively safeguard pupils online.

Where pupils are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place in line with normal practice.



All staff will be reminded of the key principles of keeping themselves and the pupils they contact safe when online.

Staff will ensure that when undertaking online conferences with partners and parents during this time will ensure that the platform used is secure so as to safeguard all participants.

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

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

All staff will be reminded of safeguarding practices to observe when interacting with pupils who are at home for the duration of this period.

There continues to be no expectation of live streaming of lessons, however when schools use strategies such as google classrooms, class dojo etc. to talk to pupils, they should remember the differences in this form of communication. Where possible, this should be undertaken in school. However, should this not be possible, and teachers need to communicate with pupils from their own homes, they should consider what will be in the background and that they are in a room where a quiet and private conversation can be undertaken. Recording these communications using the technology available protects both staff and pupils from allegations.

Schools will take note of the guidance from the National Cyber Security Centre supports this as well as guidance from the UK Safer Internet Centre on safe remote learning.

Where pupils are expected to complete learning online, then there will be clear reporting structures in place so that pupils can alert teachers and the DSL as to any issues. Schools will also have signposted children to age appropriate resources from organisations such as [Childline](#) for support, [Safer Internet Centre](#) to report and remove harmful online content and [CEOP](#) for advice and guidance on reporting online abuse.

DSL's and Headteachers will continue to remind and update parents about the online safety guidance from the government through [this link](#). They will also ensure that parents are aware of the sites that their children are expected to use and the school staff that their child will interact with as this may not be the teacher they are used to.

### **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.

DGAT COVID-19 Interim Appendix

## **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](https://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, 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. Guidance states that unless a pupil fits the significant underlying health advice they should be in school.
- 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 assessed as in greatest need. 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.
- Visits to the doorstep are to be agreed and scheduled with the family. Following visits, the DS/Deputy DSL will complete conference calls with one another to support progress and effective working practice.
- 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:**

- 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).

### **Any other vulnerable pupils including EHCP**

**For most pupils with an EHCP, it is safer for them to stay at home. However, some parent's may struggle because their child needs specialist support or they are a key worker.**

- DSL to check in according to perceived need.
- All pupils with a medical 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.
- If you are unable to make provision for pupil who needs to be in school, you will need to liaise with other schools to find an alternative placement. LA Links can support with this. However, please remember that for many children they may struggle to make this transition.
- If you are considering an alternative school for a pupil with an EHCP, there should be a conversation between SENCO and Headteacher and the plan shared before deciding. Where possible, an appropriate member of staff from your school should accompany the child for support and familiarity.
- 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](mailto: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](mailto: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 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 collate vulnerable pupil list
- 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.

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