

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers guidance – updated 20 May 2020

Updated 20th May to provide guidance on what schools and colleges should be thinking about as they plan for more children to return from week commencing 1 June - especially around updating the child protection policy, designated safeguarding lead arrangements, protecting vulnerable children and mental health.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-safeguarding-in-schools-colleges-and-other-providers>

From the week commencing 1 June, the DfE expects schools and EY settings to be able to welcome back more children and have updated Coronavirus (COVID-19): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers to support schools and colleges to plan for this return. The guidance advises that:

The planned return of more children is an appropriate time to consider a further child protection policy review (led by a DSL or deputy, wherever possible). In some cases, a coronavirus annex/addendum that summaries any key coronavirus related changes might be more effective than re-writing and re-issuing the whole policy. The revised child protection policy should reflect the return of more children from 1 June.

The guidance suggests that the annex revisits various aspects of safeguarding in schools, which we have developed below for schools to use and amend as they begin to admit more children.

Annex/addendum to school/college/the setting child protection policy.

Alongside our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, the following updated arrangements apply until further notice:

Vulnerable children include children who have a social worker and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans. It also includes children who have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued attendance as per current government guidance.

As some more of our children return to our school/setting, we will continue to liaise with the Local Authority and with parents to decide whether a child other than those in year groups R, Y1 and Y6 with an EHCP needs to continue to be offered a place at *school/college/the setting* 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. We understand that many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home. Eligibility for free school meals is not a key determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Our senior leaders and DSLs (Designated Safeguarding Leads) have the flexibility to offer a place to children who do not have a social worker but for whom some safeguarding needs have already been identified.

There is an expectation that all vulnerable children who have a social worker will continue to attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance. We will follow the process set out in Wiltshire Councils flowchart *School/Setting attendance and children with a CiN or CP plan*, until further notice.

To support the above, we will, when communicating with parents/carers of vulnerable children, confirm that emergency contact numbers kept on the children's files are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

As children return to school, we will ask parents to advise us of any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing before a child returns so that safeguarding, and welfare information held on all children remains accurate.

Concerns about vulnerable children not physically attending should be progressed through the most appropriate channels. Any concerns around ongoing attendance should be referred to the EWO service either via the school link

EWO or karen.green@wiltshire.gov.uk .- currently this service is being offered to all settings. Its important at this time that even if a case would not typically 'meet threshold' that we collectively discuss children we are concerned about in a multi-agency forum and determine what support can best meet their needs. Contact the Early Support Hub for additional advice and support for children and families on 0300 4560108 or MASH@wiltshire.gov.uk

As children return to college/school/setting, there is an expectation that staff will work with and support children's social workers, the local authority virtual school head for looked-after and previously looked-after children and any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners. Regular contact should be made with these partners. During the current situation schools can request a 'team around the school' meeting by contacting their Regional Lead. The Regional Lead will be able to work alongside the school and relevant agencies to set up communication channels if schools or welfare partners are finding this challenging.

Regional leads for School Effectiveness

North: steve.wigley@wiltshire.gov.uk

East: lesley.lowe@wiltshire.gov.uk

South: helen.southwell@wiltshire.gov.uk

West: simon.watkins@wiltshire.gov.uk

Designated Safeguarding Leads

To ensure school/setting staff have access to specialist advice and support about safeguarding, the following details continue to apply as the school/setting reopens to an increased number of children. Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, the following arrangements for a trained DSL from a nominated school/setting to provide advice remotely.

Name	Job title	Responsibilities	Main registered base	Phone number	Email address

School staff and volunteers are made aware that DSLs (and deputies) may have more time to support staff and children regarding new concerns (and referrals as appropriate) as more children return .

Currently face to face training is not be offered until September. New e learning options are available to book through the SVPP including Domestic Abuse, County Lines & Gang Activity and Child Exploitation. The NSPCC are offering e learning for Safer recruitment training and the Home Office for Prevent.

Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they will continue to follow the process outlined in the school/setting Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. We recognise that staff and volunteers may identify new safeguarding concerns about individual children as they see them in person following partial school/setting closures and staff and volunteers must follow the school reporting procedures if they have any concern.

If a member of staff cannot access our electronic data management system for safeguarding from home, they will contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who is available from the list above.

Any email containing confidential information will be sent using official college/school/setting email addresses.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the *school/setting*, they will continue to follow the Wiltshire process set out in the allegations flowchart published on www.wiltshirescb.org.uk. In the absence of the headteacher and/or Chair of governors, staff will follow the alternative leadership contact arrangements.

Changes to the DOFA Service due to Covid-19

- Currently there are some changes in seeking a consultation or making a referral to the Wiltshire DOFA Service.
- **From June 1st**
All consultations and referrals must be made in writing. Concerns and referrals for the attention of the Designated Officer should be emailed to dofaservice@wiltshire.gov.uk along with a name and contact telephone number and a referral form will be forwarded for completion.
- The telephone number for the Service is now 0300 4560108.

As part of the plan to reopen the school/setting to more children, staff are :

- made aware that issues around peer on peer abuse may have increased for some children during their time away from school as they may have spent more time online. Equally children may struggle to reestablish positive relationships with peers as they return to the school/setting. Staff are reminded about the school/setting policy with regards to the identification and reporting of peer on peer abuse.
- Reminded about what should do if they have concerns about a staff member or volunteer who may pose a safeguarding risk to children (the principles in part 4 of KCSIE will continue to support how a school or college responds to any such concerns)

Safeguarding Training and Induction

As DSL face-to-face training has not been available during the *partial school/setting* closure due to Covid-19, D/DSL training will continue to meet statutory requirements, even if the refresher training and annual updates are not available within the required timescales. Our D/DSLs will continue to keep up to date by reading government guidance and other relevant newsletters eg NSPCC as they are published.

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, as appropriate.

As new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter our school/setting, 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/setting, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic. We will follow Wiltshire Council advice about safeguarding in relation to visiting staff/volunteers as it is published and updated on Right Choice until further notice.

For movement within the Trust, the Multi- Academy Trust (MAT) safeguarding lead/HR Manager will confirm that all staff have received appropriate safeguarding training.

Upon arrival, at our school/setting visiting staff/volunteers working here on a temporary basis, are given a copy of our safeguarding/child protection policy, including confirmation of D/DSL arrangements.

Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

When recruiting new staff, we will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for our school/setting, including relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019).

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. We will follow this guidance [DBS checks during Covid-19 outbreak](#)

We will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in in KCSIE and will follow Wiltshire Council advice about safeguarding in relation to the SCR and visiting staff/volunteers as it is published and updated on Right Choice until further notice.

Online safety in schools and colleges

During the partial school/setting closure and as children return to the school/setting, we will continue to provide a safe online environment for staff and children. This includes the use of an online filtering system. Where children are using computers in school/setting, appropriate supervision will continue to be in place and use will be in line with guidance provided by Wiltshire Council COVID-19 Guidance and advice for opening of educational settings 19 May.

All staff who interact with children, including online, will continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns will be dealt with as per our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and where appropriate referrals will still be made to children's social care and as required, the police. As online teaching continues for children not yet offered a place back at school, will follow the same principles as set out in our Staff Behaviour Policy. We will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

Supporting children not in school/setting

We recognise that school/setting is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers.

We will devise plans to support any child who is vulnerable and not able to attend school/setting for any reason as well as to support the children as they return to school. Plans will be shared with parents and (social workers where involved) and will be reviewed fortnightly.

Supporting children in school/setting

The Headteacher/manager will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate. We 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 to limit the risk of spread of Covid -19 as well as Wiltshire Council COVID-19 Guidance and advice for opening of educational settings 19 May.

Support from the Multi-Academy Trust

The Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL to carry out their role effectively. This includes, remotely accessing Child Protection files for the purpose of quality assurance, support, guidance and direction. The MAT will also provide regular group and individual supervision sessions. This may take the form of an online meeting.