

Early Years Safeguarding Policy Amendment during the Coronavirus Outbreak June 2020

Settings must continue to take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well during this period and have regard to the government's statutory guidance on [working together to safeguard children](#). The safeguarding and welfare sections of the [EYFS](#) still apply, including requirements relating to child protection arrangements. Settings should work closely with local authorities.

PLEASE NOTE: This amendment is a framework and should be seen as a starting point for development to fit your setting's individual context. It is based on Government Guidance which may from time to time be amended and as a result it is the Early Years Settings responsibility to keep up to date with current Government Guidance.

Prior to being adopted, each section should be reviewed to determine if it is appropriate for your setting. If more or less information is required, it is the responsibility of the setting to make those amendments.

It has been adapted from OCC Schools Safeguarding Amendment by Alison Beasley, Designated Officer and Manager of the Education Safeguarding Advisory Team With thanks to Louis Donald, Trust Safeguarding Manager at the Stowe Valley Multi Academy Trust and Andrew Hall , <https://www.safeguardingschools.co.uk/andrew-hall>

This is also in line with DFE guidance <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>

All Early Years Settings should refer to the [EYFS statutory framework](#) and [Gov.uk planning guide for wider opening of EY and childcare settings](#)

You must also adhere to local guidance from [OSCB](#).

The setting must carry out a Risk Assessment for wider opening which must link together Health and Safety and the Safeguarding Policy.

AMEND**COVID-19 arrangements for safeguarding and
child protection at
(Name of Setting)****Setting name:****Date:****Date shared with Committee and trustees:****Date shared with staff:**

This addendum of the (Setting Name) Safeguarding, and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

1. **Context**.....
2. **Key contacts**
3. **Vulnerable children**.....
4. **Attendance monitoring**.....
5. **Designated Safeguarding Lead**.....
6. **Reporting a concern**.....
7. **Safeguarding Training and induction**
8. **Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff**
9. **Online safety in the setting**.....
10. **Children and online safety away from the setting**.....
11. **Supporting children not in the setting**
12. **Supporting children in the setting**
13. **Peer on Peer abuse**.....
14. **Mental Health and Wellbeing**.....

1. Context

As part of a roadmap towards recovery from the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak the government announced plans for welcoming all children back to early years settings from 1 June at the earliest. The [Government's planning guidance](#) should be used to plan how all children will be supported to address the specific issues that may have arisen due to coronavirus, taking into account children's individual needs and circumstances

The Government's planning guidance covers significant safeguarding information including health and wellbeing difficulties, being alert to hidden or missed harms, bereavement and transitions.

In light of coronavirus the setting will review child protection arrangements and will plan how best to support high needs groups, including children with SEND, vulnerable children and disadvantaged children when the setting reopens, referring to [government guidance on supporting vulnerable children](#) when planning this

The Gov.uk planning guidance states: 'The coronavirus outbreak may have caused significant mental health or wellbeing difficulties for some children. We will be alert to harms that may have been hidden or missed while they have not been attending the setting. We will consider the mental health, pastoral or wider health and wellbeing support children may need, including with bereavement, and how to support them to transition into the setting after a long period of absence. We will consider how we will involve parents and carers to identify specific support for children and how children's needs may have changed and to prepare for their return to your setting.'

2. Key contacts

Staff will be informed of who the DSL and deputy DSL is on a daily basis and how to contact them. Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

Role	Name	Phone	email
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)			
Manager if not DSL or DDSL			
Deputy Designated safeguarding lead (DDSL)			
Chair of Committee/trustees			
Safeguarding committee member/trustee			
Others			

3. Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children and young people during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak are those across all year groups who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan and it is determined, following risk assessment, that their needs can be as safely or more safely met in the educational environment
- 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. This might include children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services, adopted children, those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training'), those living in temporary accommodation, those who are young carers and others at the provider and local authority's discretion.

The term 'all year groups' in this context for attendance purposes refers to children under 5 eligible for early years entitlements and children and young people aged 5 to 18 (or aged 5 to 25 for children and young people with an EHC plan).

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

The Manager and Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

..... (Setting Name) will ensure relevant safeguarding and welfare information held on all children (including returning children) remains accurate. The DSL will do all they reasonably can to ask parents and carers to advise them of any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing that they should be aware of before a child returns.

..... (Setting Name) 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. The lead person for this will be:

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to the setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and

..... (Setting Name) will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent. We as an Early Years provider will ensure that all professionals involved with these vulnerable children, (e.g. social workers, SEND case workers, LCSS, Early

Help worker etc) are fully informed around the current attendance of the child (attending the setting or not) and if not attending the setting the arrangements that we have put in place around safeguarding this child.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, (Name of Setting) or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

..... (Name of Setting) will encourage our vulnerable children to attend, including remotely if needed.

If the setting should need to close the setting will work with the Local authority to identify alternative provision for children who need places. If a child moves settings, important information should be provided by the parent or carer to the new setting on day one, including emergency contact details, dietary requirements and medical needs to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the child. In the case of vulnerable children, the setting will notify the local authority (and social worker, where relevant) that these vulnerable children need alternative provision. The setting will provide the receiving setting with any relevant welfare and child protection information. The receiving setting will be made aware of the reason the child is vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them. As a minimum, the receiving setting should, as appropriate, have access to a vulnerable 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 is (and, for looked-after children, who the responsible virtual school head is).

The transfer of necessary information will ideally happen before a child arrives at the new setting and, where that is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable. Any exchanges of information will ideally happen between the designated safeguarding leads (or deputies), and/or between special educational needs co-ordinators/named individual with oversight of special educational needs provision for children with EHC plans.

The setting will continue to have appropriate regard to data protection and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). This does not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. For more information please read the Department for Education's guidance: [Information sharing advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers guidance](#).

4. Attendance monitoring

For information on attendance refer to Gov.uk [Planning Guide for early years and childcare settings](#)

No one with symptoms should attend the setting for any reason. Eligible children – including priority groups - are strongly encouraged to attend their education setting, unless they are self-isolating, or they are clinically vulnerable (in which case they should follow medical advice). If someone in their household is extremely clinically vulnerable, they should only attend if stringent social distancing can be adhered to,

and the child is able to understand and follow those instructions. Families should notify the setting as normal if their child is unable to attend so that staff can explore the reason with them and address barriers together.

The setting will encourage attendance of vulnerable children and the best way to support them to transition into the setting according to their needs and their individual family circumstances. In cases where children are considered vulnerable and do not attend provision as expected, as with normal practice, the setting will follow up with the parent or carer – and social worker and local authority where appropriate – to explore reasons for absence. The setting will work with local authorities, and health visitors where relevant, to monitor the welfare of vulnerable children who are not attending the provision, and other children they might wish to keep in touch with for safeguarding purposes.

The Department for Education will continue to monitor attendance at early years settings, via local authorities.

..... (Setting Name) and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending the setting –
..... will then follow up on any child that they were expecting to attend, who does not.

..... 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.

This will be via a telephone conversation.

To support the above, (Setting Name) will, when communicating with parents/carers 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 the setting, or discontinues, (Setting Name) will notify their social worker.

The Setting will work with the Local Authority to monitor the welfare of vulnerable children who are not attending provision, and other children they might wish to keep in touch with, for safeguarding purposes.

5. Designated Safeguarding Lead

..... (Setting Name) has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

A member of the DSL team will always be available during setting opening hours. The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example when working from home.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a designated member of staff will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

This might include liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and as required liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the setting.

It is important that all our staff and volunteers 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.

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

6. Reporting a concern

Staff and volunteers may identify new safeguarding concerns about individual children as they see them in person following partial closures.

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the Setting Safeguarding Policy, this includes making a report via which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access our normal reporting systems from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the manager. This will 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 setting, they should continue to follow our normal procedures and alert the manager immediately. The manager will follow normal allegation management procedures as detailed in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and liaise with Oxfordshire's Local Authority Designated Officer; Alison Beasley, as detailed in our main policy. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the manager whilst away from the setting, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the manager.

Concerns around the Manager should be directed to the Chair of Committee and referred to the LADO without delay:
.....

7. Safeguarding Training and induction

All face to face DSL training has been suspended by the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (OSCB) and it is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID 19 virus.

Guidance from the OSCB can be found here <https://www.oscb.org.uk/learning-zone/training/>

For the period COVID-19 measures are in place, a DSL (or deputy) who have been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputy) even if they miss their refresher training.

All existing staff have had safeguarding training. The DSL should 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 our 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 setting, 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

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.

8. 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, (Setting Name) 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.

Where our setting are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE. Under no

circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

..... (Setting Name) 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, in line with advice from the LADO where appropriate.

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current National emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any setting is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the setting, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

Workforce already engaging in regulated activity and who already have the appropriate DBS check, there is no expectation that a new DBS check should be obtained where that member of the workforce temporarily moves to another school or setting to support the response to coronavirus.

Where new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter the setting, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

9. Online safety

..... (Setting Name) will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system. Where children are using computers in the setting, appropriate supervision will be in place.

10. Children and online safety away from the setting

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 Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

..... (Setting Name) 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:

- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and the background should be blurred.

- The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use platforms provided by to communicate with children
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

All staff at (Setting Name) will be reminded of the following policies:

- Staff code of conduct
- Acceptable users' policy
- Social media guidance

Further details can be found in [Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety guidance for practitioners.](#)

11. Supporting children not in the setting

.....(Setting Name) is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children.

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 the setting, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child.

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

..... (Setting Name) and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan.

This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The setting will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

.....(Setting Name) recognises that the 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.

12. Supporting children in the setting

..... (Setting Name) is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children.

..... (Setting Name) will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The manager will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

..... (Setting Name) 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.

..... (Setting Name) 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.

13. Peer on Peer Abuse

..... (Setting Name) recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where a setting 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 Policy.

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

Concerns and actions must be recorded, and appropriate referrals made.

14. Mental Health and Wellbeing

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of children and their parents.

..... (Setting Name) ensure appropriate support is in place for them.

[Guidance for parents and carers on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing during the coronavirus outbreak.](#)

Staff may require appropriate instruction and training on identifying and supporting vulnerable children and parents that return to the setting, for example by sign-posting them to appropriate local services such as mental health, domestic or substance abuse services.

It will be necessary to consider how vulnerable children, who are currently attending the setting, continue to have their needs met and to be supported as the setting takes on more children.

All staff will be sent this amendment to read and sign to say they have read and understood the content. If they are working at home they will email to say the above.

