SAFEGUARDING POLICY: COVID-19 ADDENDUM

School: Gartree High School

Approved by: Governor Welfare Committee

Date: November 2020

Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Dean Baines	dbaines@gartree.leics.sch.uk
Deputy DSL	Ed Wilson	ewilson@gartree.leics.sch.uk
Designated member of senior leadership team if DSL (and deputy) can't be on site	Ben Rackley	brackley@gartree.leics.sch.uk
Headteacher	Sonia Singleton	ssingleton@gartree.leics.sch.uk
Local authority designated officer (LADO) - Leicestershire		**Allegations Line:** 0116 305 4141 **Email:** CFS-LADO@leics.gov.uk
Individual Leicestershire LADO Contact Information:	Kim Taylor Lovona Brown	0116 305 5641 Kim.Taylor2@leics.gov.uk 0116 305 8161 Lovona.Brown@leics.gov.uk
Chair of governors	Adrian Peryer	aperyer@icloud.com

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1 Scope and definitions

This addendum applies from the start of the autumn term 2020. It reflects updated advice from our 3 local safeguarding partners

- Leicestershire Police; and
- West Leicestershire Clinical Commissioning Group *[or – delete]* East Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Group

and the local authority (LA):

- Leicestershire County Council *[or – delete]* Leicester City Council *[or – delete]* Rutland County Council

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of Coronavirus and should be read in conjunction with that policy. Unless covered here, our normal child protection policy continues to apply.

In this addendum, where we refer to measures to protect pupils who are at home, this means those who are learning at home for reasons to do with Coronavirus – for example, due to clinical and/or public health advice, if there's a local lockdown or if they need to self-isolate.

In this addendum, where we refer to vulnerable children, this means those who have a social worker, including children:

- With a child protection plan
- Assessed as being in need
- Looked after by the local authority
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

In addition, this Addendum will cover children who have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable (for example by the L.A) and who we have safeguarding concerns about who include, but are not limited to children:

- On the edge of receiving support from children's social care services;
- Adopted;
- At risk of becoming NEET;
- Living in temporary accomodation;
- Who are young carers;
- Considered vulnerable by the school.

2. Core safeguarding principles

We will follow the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

- The best interests of children must come first;
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, they should continue to act on it immediately;
- A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy should be available at all times (see section 4 for details of our arrangements);
- It's essential that unsuitable people don't enter the school workforce or gain access to children;
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online.

3. Reporting concerns

All staff and volunteers must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this, both for children at school and those at home.

As a reminder, all staff should continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

Where the usual arrangements for reporting to the DSL cannot be followed, for example our DSL and Deputy DSL(s) are self-isolating but are otherwise well and able to provide advice they can be contacted as per the contact details above by the designated senior leader.

In addition to this there is a safeguarding reporting email that can be used to increase ability to remotely report safeguarding concerns: safeguarding@gartree.leics.sch.uk

4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements

We aim to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site wherever possible. Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

Where a concern needs to be raised the first contact will be either the DSL or Deputy.

If our DSL (or deputy) can't be in school but they can be contacted remotely on the number provided, the senior leader will be responsible for liaising with our off-site DSL (or deputy) to make sure they (the senior leader) can:

- Identify the most vulnerable children in school;

- Update and manage access to child protection files, where necessary;

- Liaise with children's social workers where they need access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments;

5. Working with other agencies

We will continue to work with children's social care, with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children, and with any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners, to help keep children safe.

We will continue to update this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

- Our local safeguarding partners

- The local authority about children with education, health and care (EHC) plans, the local authority designated officer and children's social care, reporting mechanisms, referral thresholds and children in need

The following guidance is currently in place:

- We will maintain a daily register of our most vulnerable children and whether they are in school or not in school for example where their class or bubble has had to self-isolate or where an individual child is self-isolating due to family circumstances. Where a child is not in school we will ensure that the relevant social worker or other agency is informed without delay.

6. Monitoring attendance

We will resume taking our attendance register. We will also follow guidance from the Department for Education on how to record attendance and what data to submit.

All pupils of compulsory school age will be expected to attend school unless a statutory reason applies (for example, the pupil has been granted an authorised absence, is unable to attend because of sickness, is unable to attend because of clinical and/or public health advice, is absent for a necessary religious observance).

Where any child we expect to attend school doesn't attend, or stops attending, we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, by following the best practice Safe and Well checks in Part A;

- Notify their social worker, where they have one (see section 5 above).

We will make arrangements with parents and carers to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details, and additional contact details where possible.

7. Peer-on-peer abuse

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education when managing reports and supporting victims of peer-on-peer abuse.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – about both children attending school and those at home. Further details on this process can be found in our Behaviour Policy.

8. Concerns about a staff member or volunteer

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – whether those concerns are about staff/supply teachers/volunteers working on site or remotely.

We will continue to refer adults who have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

We will continue to refer potential cases of teacher misconduct to the Teaching Regulation Agency. We will do this using the email address Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

9. Safe and Well Checks

Children who are "vulnerable" or assessed as such under section 1 above and if these children are not in school we will put a Safe and Well check in place.

Each child will have an individual plan and an assessment will take place to determine:

- How often the school will make contact– this will be at least once a week;

- Which staff member(s) will make contact – as far as possible, this will be staff who know the family well;

- How staff will make contact – this will be over the phone, doorstep visits, or a combination of both;

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them as and when circumstances change/or at regular intervals:

If we can't make contact, we will try different methods to do so and if contact still fails we will refer to Children's social care and/or the Police in accordance with local guidance.

10. Safeguarding all children

Staff and volunteers are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children at greater risk.

Staff and volunteers will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on pupils' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately in line with the procedures set out in section 3 above.

10.1 Children returning to school

The DSL (or deputy) will do all they reasonably can to find out from parents and carers whether there have been any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing that they should be aware of before children return.

The DSL (and deputy) will be given time to support staff and children regarding new concerns (and referrals as appropriate) as children return to school.

Staff and volunteers will be alert to any new safeguarding concerns as they see pupils in person.

10.2 Children at home

The school will maintain contact with children who are at home. Staff will try to speak directly to children at home to help identify any concerns. They will use school phones and devices to make calls home. Or, if necessary they will use personal phones but they will withhold their personal number.

For children at home, they will look out for signs like:

- Not completing assigned work or logging on to school systems

- No contact from children or families

- Seeming more withdrawn during any class check-ins or video calls

11. Online safety

11.1 In school

We will continue to have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place in school.

If IT staff are unavailable, we will act in accordance with our contingency plan seeking IT support from the Local Authority.

11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with children online, they will continue to follow our existing staff behaviour policy/code of conduct and IT acceptable use policy and social media policy.

We will ensure appropriate safeguarding practices in our approach to remote learning by using Teams and school email as the primary lines of communication and setting of work. Online conduct by staff and students will be in line with our normal working, behaviour and learning expectations.

Staff will continue to be alert to signs that a child may be at risk of harm online, and act on any concerns immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in section 3 of this Addendum.

We will make sure children know how to report any concerns they have back to our school, and signpost them to other sources of support too.

11.3 Working with parents and carers

We will make sure parents and carers:

- Are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of staying safe online;

- Know what our school is asking children to do online, including what sites they will be using and who they will be interacting with from our school;

- Are aware of the safeguarding risks posed if they chose to supplement the remote teaching and resources our school provides by engaging online companies or tutors and that they should only use reputable online companies or tutors

- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online by providing the links to the following on the school website:

  - www.net-aware.org.uk/

  - www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/topics/safety-and-privacy/

  - www.saferinternet.org.uk

12. Mental health

12.1 Children returning to school

Staff and volunteers will be aware of the possible effects that this period may have had on pupils' mental health. They will look out for behavioural signs, including pupils being fearful, withdrawn, aggressive, oppositional or excessively clingy, to help identify where support may be needed.

12.2 Children at home

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils through regular staff contact, signposting to external support, working with parents and, where necessary, making referrals. We will signpost all pupils, parents/carers and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time.

When setting expectations for pupils learning remotely and not attending school, teachers will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health.

Staff and volunteers will be alert to mental health concerns in children who are at home, and act on these immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in section 3 of this.

13. Staff recruitment, training and induction

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that staff and volunteers who work in our school are safe to work with children.

We will continue to follow our safer recruitment procedures, and part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

When carrying out DBS checks and right to work checks, we will follow the latest guidance from the DBS, Home Office and Immigration Enforcement as appropriate (for example, with regards to the process for verifying documents). We will inform candidates about the intended process as soon as reasonably practicable.

We will continue to do our usual checks on new volunteers and do risk assessments to decide whether volunteers who aren't in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with paragraphs 183-188 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

14. Safeguarding Induction and Training

We will make sure staff and volunteers are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements.

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive a safeguarding induction in line with the expectations of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

15. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or Department for Education is updated, and as a minimum every 6weeks by the DSL.

At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

16. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

Child protection policy

Staff behaviour policy/code of conduct

IT acceptable use policy/social media policy

Health and safety policy

Online safety policy

Anti-bullying Policy

Behaviour Policy

Attendance Policy