

Safeguarding and Child Protection - Addendum 1

*To be read in conjunction with:
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*

Context

During the Coronavirus (Covid 19) epidemic there have been periods where parents were asked by the Government, wherever possible, to keep their children at home. Only children of critical workers and vulnerable children and young people continue to attend school. All other pupils and students receive remote education. GDF School will follow any updated DfE guidance for any further periods of home learning, if any, to ensure best practice for safeguarding all children.

Key Contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Lisa O'Connor 07971165588

lisaconnor@graduatelydevelopingfutures.co.uk

Deputy DSL Sandra Pay 07845986899 sandrapay@graduatelydevelopingfutures.co.uk

Principal James Gregory 07854434575 jag@graduatelydevelopingfutures.co.uk

Chair of Governors Trystan Williams 0117 3010819 Trystan.williams@venturersacademy.org

Safeguarding Governor Thinus Delpont thinusdelpont@2beducation.org

School telephone number and Email address: 07854434575

jag@graduatelydevelopingfutures.co.uk

There is the possibility due to the circumstances of the virus that the DSL or a deputy DSL will not be on site at all times. The school will ensure that there is a person available to contact directly whilst working from home if they are not on site. This may be organised on a rota basis. Staff, both those working on site or those working remotely, will be made aware of who to contact should the DSL not be on site, so they are aware of who and how to take any safeguarding concerns they have regarding children.

Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children who can access school or educational settings are listed in the Government guidance. Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those who they consider will benefit, whilst adhering to government advice about staying home if possible. GDF will continue to work with and support children's social workers and other support partners to help protect vulnerable children. 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 an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and GDF will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent. Support will continue to be offered remotely to any family that chooses not to access their child's place in school, and their place will be available should they choose to access it in the future. Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, GDF or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England. GDF will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend school, including remotely if

needed via our distance learning packages that are available to our other students and with support from staff as appropriate. GDF is aware that circumstances for families will change e.g. children will come out of isolation, parents may access employment that makes them critical to the COVID 19 response, it is our intention to remain as flexible as we can to continue to offer a school place and care to those who need it. Parents are encouraged to contact the school if their circumstances do change to discuss their support needs. School staff (supported by the DSL or deputy) will continue to work with and support children's social workers and any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners to help protect vulnerable children whether remotely or whilst accessing care in school. Our DSL and safeguarding team will continue to assess the needs of children and their families and ensure that Early Help and intervention is accessed as necessary.

Attendance monitoring

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance. GDF and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – GDF will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. GDF 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. GDF will continue to notify social workers, and any other relevant safeguarding or welfare partners, where children accessing external support do not attend, and also follow up with parent/carers whose child has been expected to attend and doesn't, in line with our attendance procedures. In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, GDF will notify their social worker, or other support partner. Vulnerable children attendance is now expected, where it is appropriate for them (that is, where there are no shielding concerns for the child or their household, and/or following a risk assessment for children with an EHC plan). We will work with families to ensure our pupils are accessing the sessions they need.

Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they will continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. In the event that this member of staff cannot be contacted, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Principal and the Safeguarding Governor. This will ensure that the concern is received and actioned as necessary. Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately as they would if normal business was happening. Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should use the same process to report this to the Principal. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Principal whilst they are away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the Principal. Concerns around the Principal should be directed to the Chair of Governors, GDF will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations. Where there are changes to local reporting or referral processes due to the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic, the Principal and DSL will ensure they are up to date with all advice and updates shared from our local safeguarding partnership and will follow any changes specified by them to continue to ensure safety for all our students.

Safeguarding Training and induction

DSL training cannot take place in face to face situations, but is available to participate in remotely. 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) whilst they seek to update their training, as it is expected that places will be in demand. All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021). The DSL 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 GDF, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction.

Safer recruitment

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, GDF will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021) (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. Under no circumstances will a person who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity alone with a child. GDF 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. GDF 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 Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current National emergency, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that GDF is aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the school, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such GDF will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date. As we reopen to more staff and pupils, we will ensure we are aware of who is on site and expected to be in regulated activity on a daily basis and they are all appropriately checked or risk assessed and are listed in our Single Central Record

Mental Health

We recognise that negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of children and their parents. We will work to provide appropriate support for our pupils and signpost parents/carers to services that are appropriate for them should they be needed. The DfE has published guidance to support the identification of children who might need additional support and we will use this, and current practice to ensure support is put in place. We recognise that the current situation could bring about changes in a child's behaviour or emotional state and this can be displayed in a range of different ways, all of which can be an indicator of an underlying problem. As well as being aware of the issues for children currently attending school, our staff will also be aware of the impact the current circumstances can have on the mental health of those students/pupils (and their parents) who are continuing to work from home, including when setting expectations of children's work. Staff and students will be made aware of expected behaviours during this period, especially regarding remote learning.

Online safety in schools

GDF recognises the importance of online safety. Should students remain at home during the global pandemic, GDF will provide home learning engagement activities and associated resources, which will be delivered to the home address by staff. There will not be a requirement for a student to access materials online. Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

Children and online safety away from school

It is important that all staff who interact with children continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, or the police. GDF will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements. If new tools or systems are recommended by staff to students, these will be checked and the schools' Data Protection Lead will be consulted. Should the school provide online teaching, this should follow the same principles as set out in the code of conduct, however some specific expectations have been put in place to further protect staff and students. These are our additional expectations for staff conduct when supporting distance learning during the COVID 19 pandemic:

- Any group conferencing or teaching that happens, needs to use Microsoft teams as a platform to complete this, this ensures appropriate monitoring and safeguarding will be in place
- Any group conferencing or teaching may need to be recorded for reference if needed, these recordings must be stored for no less than 21 days
- If recording lessons or conferencing a group of students or parents, staff must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household
- If recording lessons or conferencing a group of students or parents, staff must not be seen to be consuming anything inappropriate e.g. alcohol, illegal substances or smoking
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms or bathrooms; and the background should be neutral and blurred
- It is strongly recommended that any live classes be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed. If this is not possible, then 2 members of staff must be in the session – this is a protective factor for staff as well as children
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day
- Language and gestures must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background
- Staff must only use platforms provided by the school to communicate with students
- Staff should record the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held
- Any lessons/worksheets shared must come from reputable sources, be appropriate in content and be sourced in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements
- If students need to be contacted by phone, contact must be made to the parent/guardian phone not the students.
- Staff must not meet up with any students in a 1:1 situation
- Staff must not meet up with any family members of students in a 1:1 situation

- Staff must be vigilant regarding concerns about their students, both in terms of safeguarding, child protection and well-being and report this in a timely manner to their DSL
- Staff members not following these additional expectations will be subject to action in the same way they would if they were not following our normal code of conduct.

Supporting children not in school

GDF is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people. 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, we will ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person. Details of this plan will be recorded by the school, shared with the senior leadership team and DSL. A record will be kept of any contact made with families and children or young people. The communication plans can include remote contact, phone contact. Other individualised contact methods could be considered and will be risk assessed and recorded. This plan will be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate. We recognise 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. Staff have been made aware of this in setting expectations of students work where they are at home.

Supporting children in school

GDF is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students and will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Principal will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety. GDF 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. GDF 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. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded where appropriate. Where GDF has concerns about the impact of staff absence, we will discuss them immediately with the SLT and implement use of risk assessment to mitigate any risk to children and staff.

Peer on Peer Abuse

GDF recognises that during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims. 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 our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The school will listen and work with the young person, parents/carers and any multiagency partner required to ensure the safety and security of that young person. Concerns and actions will be recorded and appropriate referrals made.

Support from GDF

GDF's DSL will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable staff to carry out their role effectively. We will continue to all work together to monitor and review our plans, with safeguarding being at the centre of them all.

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