



COVID-19 restricting attendance
during the national lockdown
January 2021:

Arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection

Key contacts: restricting attendance during the national lockdown

Role	Name	Contact details
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Ian Johnson	01332347374 head@markeaton.derby.sch.uk
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Mental Health Lead	Jess Hawley	01332347374
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Note: Contact details for all other key safeguarding agencies are as referenced in the school safeguarding policy. This includes referrals to local authority early help services, children's social care and the local authority designated officer (LADO).

1. Context

To support public health efforts to arrest the rising cases of Covid-19 (Coronavirus), on 4th January 2020, the Prime Minister announced a new national lockdown for England, with people instructed to "stay at home" as they did during the first lockdown in March 2020.

During this period of national lockdown only children of critical workers and vulnerable children and young people should attend school. All other learners should not attend and will receive remote education until schools are back open. In addition, learners who are self-isolating and clinically extremely vulnerable learners should not attend school.

The school acknowledges that limiting attendance does not suggest that schools have become significantly less safe for young people. Instead limiting attendance is about supporting the reduction of the overall number of social contacts in our communities.

Currently there are no additional changes to local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, which remain the responsibility of the local safeguarding partners (local authority, police and health). We expect our local safeguarding partners to be vigilant and responsive to all safeguarding threats and ensure vulnerable children and young people are safe – particularly as more children and young people will be learning remotely.

2. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of restricting school attendance during the current national lockdown, and reflects updated advice from our local safeguarding partners Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (Derbyshire County Council, Derby City Council, Derby and Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Tameside and Glossop Clinical Commissioning Group and Derbyshire Constabulary).

Throughout this time schools must continue to have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (2020, updated January 2021). This addendum contains details of the school individual safeguarding arrangements during our continued restricted opening, and should be read in conjunction with the school safeguarding policy, local [multi-agency safeguarding children procedures](#) and national sector specific COVID 19 guidance.

The addendum sets out changes to our normal safeguarding policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance collection for Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance for schools and other educational settings, and specifically [Restricting attendance during the national lockdown: schools](#), [Guidance for full opening: special schools and other specialist settings](#) and [Children of critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educational settings](#).

It will be important that all staff working in the school are aware of the addendum so that the school is able to effectively safeguard and protect all of our learners.

Vulnerable children

Unless covered here, our normal safeguarding policy continues to apply.

The Department for Education's (DfE's) guidance [Children of critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educational settings](#) defines 'vulnerable children' as children who have a social worker, an education, health and care plan (EHCP) or who may be vulnerable for another reason at local discretion ("otherwise vulnerable").

This includes children 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
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance. This might include:
 - children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services
 - adopted children or children on a special guardianship order
 - those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
 - those living in temporary accommodation
 - those who are young carers
 - those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
 - care leavers
 - others at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health

Critical Workers

The DfE definition of critical workers are those parents whose work is critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and EU transition response. This includes those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors; further details are outlined in the [guidance](#). Children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical worker can go to school if required, **but parents and carers should keep their children at home if they can.**

We will speak to parents and carers to identify who needs to come to school.

3. Core safeguarding principles

We will still have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2020\)](#) and relevant government coronavirus guidance to ensure we keep children safe.

Although we are operating in a different way to normal, we are still following these important safeguarding principles:

- The best interests of children must always continue to 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 5 for details of our arrangements)
- It is essential that unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's/ education workforce and/or gain access to children
- Children should continue to be protected when they are online

The school will, as far as is reasonably possible, take a whole institution approach to safeguarding. This will allow us to ensure that any new policies and processes in response to Covid 19 are not weakening our approach to safeguarding or undermining our policy.

4. Reporting concerns

All staff and volunteers must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child or the behaviour of a member of staff, including supply staff or volunteers immediately.

It is still vitally important to do this.

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions will continue to be recorded using the school's agreed safeguarding record keeping processes (CPOMs). This should include any school or multi-agency plans (including contact plans), risk assessments and reviews.

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

5. Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) arrangements

We aim to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site every day of the week.

In addition to this we will:

- Keep all school staff and volunteers informed by (*email/ other method of communication*) as to who will be the DSL (or deputy) on any given day, and how to contact them
- We will ensure that DSLs (and deputies), wherever their location, know who the most vulnerable children in our school are (via CPOMs)
- Ensure there is clear communication and shared intelligence amongst the appropriate staff (via CPOMs)
- In the event of using a temporary 'shared' DSL (likely to be a member of the SLT), the school will ensure they are conversant with the school's safeguarding systems. Any necessary safeguarding information will be shared, including the list of vulnerable children, making sure they are aware of the children's safeguarding needs, potential risks and have knowledge of any child protection or child in need plans in place. They will also be provided with access to the school's safeguarding system and files

6. Working with other agencies

We will continue to work with children's social care and with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children.

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 services including social care, reporting mechanisms, thresholds and children in need

The partnership guidance is currently in place: see [Coronavirus: key information about our safeguarding arrangements](#)

7. Attendance at school

We will continue to record attendance in the register and follow up on absences of the pupils who are expected to be in school; where a parent wishes for their child to be absent, the absence will be authorised during this national lockdown period. **Absence will not be penalised.**

The school will strongly encourage vulnerable children and young people to attend.

The school will follow up on any learner that they were expecting to attend, who does not. The school 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.

To support the above, the school will, when communicating with parents/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 school, is absent or discontinues, the school will notify their social worker, MAT worker and/or relevant other organisation staff.

We will work together with the social worker, MAT worker and/or other relevant organisations to follow up with the parent or carer to explore the reason for absence, discussing their concerns using supporting guidance considering the child's circumstances and their best interests.

In addition, we will work together with MAT worker/social worker and other relevant organisations to encourage the child or young person to attend educational provision, particularly where the social worker or MAT worker agrees that the child or young person's attendance would be appropriate.

Where a leave of absence is granted to a vulnerable child or young person, the school will still speak to parents and carers, and social workers/MAT workers (where applicable) to explore the reasons for this and any concerns raised. The discussions should focus on the welfare of the child or young

person and ensuring that the child or young person is able to access appropriate education and support while they are at home.

Where a vulnerable child is self-isolating the school will put systems in place to keep in contact with them. When a vulnerable child is asked to self-isolate, we will notify their social worker/MAT worker (if they have one). School leaders should then agree with the social worker/MAT worker the best way to maintain contact and offer support to the vulnerable child or young person. The school also has procedures in place to check if a vulnerable child is able to access remote education support, to support them to access it (as far as possible) and to regularly check if they are doing so (attendance registers on Microsoft Teams).

Should the school need to temporarily stop on-site provision on public health advice, we will inform the local authority to discuss alternative arrangements for vulnerable children and young people and work towards welcoming back learners as soon as possible, where feasible to do so.

We will work collaboratively with other schools and education providers and other local partners (including the local authority, social workers, MAT workers, police, health, youth services, key workers etc.) to maximise opportunities for face-to-face provision for vulnerable children.

We are using the Department for Education's daily online attendance form to keep an accurate record of who is attending school.

8. Safeguarding for vulnerable children not attending school

We have risk assessments as well as contact plans in place for our vulnerable children, for circumstances where:

- They won't be attending school (for example where the school, parent/carer and social worker/MAT worker, if relevant, have decided together that this wouldn't be in the child's best interests); or
- They would usually attend but have to self-isolate

These plans are led and coordinated in school and will vary for each child depending on their circumstances.

9. Supporting vulnerable children and children of critical workers in school

The school will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to learner ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

The school will continue to follow Public Health advice to minimise Covid 19. This includes complying with health and safety law, by assessing risks and putting in place proportionate control measures. We will thoroughly review our health and safety risk assessments and plans that address the risks identified using the system of controls outlined in government guidance.

The school 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 support will be bespoke to each child and recorded.

10. Children attending other settings

Where children are temporarily required to attend another setting, we will make sure the receiving school is provided with any relevant welfare and child protection information.

Wherever possible, our DSL (or deputy) and/or special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) will share, as applicable:

- The reason(s) why the child is considered vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them
- The child's EHC plan and risk assessment, graduated response plan, early help plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or personal education plan
- Details of the child's social worker or MAT worker and any other relevant agencies offering input with the child and their family
- Details of the virtual school head
- Where the DSL, deputy or SENCO can't share this information, the senior leader(s) identified in Key Contacts will do this.

We will share this information before the child arrives as far as is possible, and otherwise as soon as possible afterwards.

11. Safeguarding all children

The school is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children and young people whether they are in school or learning remotely at home. Staff and volunteers are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children at greater risk.

We will continue to have an open and accepting attitude towards children as part of our responsibility for pastoral care. Children, parents and staff will be free to talk about any concerns and will see the setting as a safe place when there are difficulties. Children's worries and fears will be taken seriously, and children encouraged to seek help from school staff. The school ensure that all of our learners know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or have difficulties.

The setting has well developed listening systems and all staff and volunteers will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on learners' mental health that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately. In particular during this lockdown, children are likely to be spending more time online for remote learning (see section 12 below) and leisure.

The school will share safeguarding and online safety messages on its [website](#), social media pages and via other communication methods such as newsletters, to ensure that children and their families are aware of key safeguarding concerns, where they can get help and know how report any concerns or worries.

12. Online safety in school and outside of school

Keeping children safe online is essential. The school will continue to work in line with the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education on what we will do to protect all of our learners online, including opportunities to teach about safeguarding and online safety. This is outlined in our [Safeguarding Policy](#) and [E-Safety Policy](#).

Delivering remote education safely

As a result of the ongoing restrictions relating to Covid-19 the school has already been delivering remote (pre-recorded/'real-time') education where it has been needed. We have continually been improving our provision in line with expectations and emerging best practice. In addition the school has a [duty](#) to provide remote education for state-funded, school-age children whose attendance would be contrary to government guidance or law around coronavirus (COVID-19). In the context of schools limiting attendance to all but vulnerable children and children of critical workers, we will build on our existing remote education ensuring a strong offer is in place for all pupils. The school will follow the expectations for remote education provision, including on delivering remote education safely, as set out in the [Restricting attendance during the national lockdown: schools Guidance for all schools in England](#). We will also follow the school's remote education policy and remote education plan which can be viewed on our website.

We will work to overcome barriers to digital access for learners and where there are learners who have difficulty engaging in remote education consider if they may be vulnerable children, and therefore eligible to attend the school provision in person. The school will work collaboratively with families, putting in place reasonable adjustments as necessary, so that pupils with SEND can successfully access remote education alongside their peers.

The school will also work alongside the local authority, health professionals and other services to ensure that children with medical conditions are fully supported, including through the use of individual healthcare plans, so that they may receive an education in line with their peers.

We will take into account the learners' age, stage of development or special educational needs, when developing and delivering remote education. Consideration of the level of parental/carer involvement to support access and engagement with remote education will also be considered.

The school has systems for checking, daily, whether learners are engaging with their work, and works with families to rapidly identify effective solutions where engagement is a concern.

[Information for pupils, parents and carers about our remote education provision](#) will be published on the school website by 25th January 2021.

Safeguarding learners and teachers online

Keeping pupils and teachers safe during remote education is essential. This includes ensuring they have received appropriate online safely training.

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 in line with our Safeguarding Policy and reporting procedures as set out in Section 3 of this addendum. Where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

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.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the staff code of conduct and the school's remote education policy.

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

When delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- Only school registered accounts and SLT approved systems will be used
- Staff will receive training and support to ensure they are familiar with the systems to be used to ensure remote teaching is reliable, good quality and safe.
- We will ensure that remote learning settings are audited (who can chat? who can start a stream? who can join?)

- Delivery will be in groups only
- There will be no 1:1s, unless there are exceptional circumstances and pre-approval by SLT
- The expectations of both student and staff behaviour (e.g. a 'classroom standard' of behaviour expected from all participants) will be made clear
- 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 a background should be added or blurred
- The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed
- Live classes will be kept to a reasonable length of time
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background
- Staff will record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held, including if anything went wrong

Working with parents and carers

The school will provide information and advice to parents/carers so that they can effectively support remote education. Good communication between school and parents/carers will help.

School contact with parents and carers during this time can also be used to reinforce the importance of children staying safe online.

We will make sure parents and carers:

- Are aware of the potential risks to children online and the importance of a safe online environment and set age-appropriate parental controls on digital devices and use internet filters to block malicious websites. These are usually free, but often need to be turned on.
- 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 that they should only use reputable online companies or tutors if they wish to supplement the remote teaching and resources our school provides.
- Know where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online.

13. Well-being and mental health

The school recognises that education is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Teachers at the school need to be aware of this in setting expectations of learners' work where they are at home. Learners may be experiencing a variety of emotions in response to the on-going Covid 19 outbreak and restrictions, such as anxiety, stress or low mood. This may particularly be the case for vulnerable children, including those with a social worker/MAT worker and young carers.

The school will:

- Support learners to contextualise these feelings as normal responses to an abnormal situation
- Offer and provide support to help learners re-adjust, either to a return to learning at home or being in school without their peers. Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are likely to need specific help around this and we will plan to meet these needs.
- Where a learner may be showing signs of more severe anxiety or depression ensure that school based support is provided, alongside appropriate referral and interventions from relevant [partner agencies](#).

We acknowledge that the return to remote learning for most will limit learners social interaction with their peers, carers and teachers, which may have an impact on wellbeing.

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current supports for learner well-being and mental health for all of our learners.

The school will make sure that parents/carers and learners are aware of who in the school to contact if they have a new concern about mental health and wellbeing. We will also signpost all learners, parents and staff to other resources to support well-being and good mental health at this time.

When setting expectations for pupils/students 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 and well-being.

We will consider the provision of pastoral and extra-curricular activities to all learners, including those learning at home (for example through online activities and assemblies), designed to:

- Support social engagement and maintain friendships
-
- Address and equip learners to respond to issues linked to Covid 19
-
- Support pupils with approaches to improving their physical and mental wellbeing

We have recently been awarded the Silver Award for being an Emotionally Healthy School (led by Jess Hawley) and we have lots of strategies in place in school to support the children.

In addition, we will provide more focused pastoral support where issues are identified that individual learners may need help with, drawing on [external support](#) where necessary and possible. The support needs of particular groups we are already aware need additional help (for example children in need, children receiving early help) will also be considered.

Where there is a concern a child is in need or suffering or likely to suffer from harm, the school (generally led by the designated safeguarding lead or deputy) will follow the safeguarding policy and DDSCP Threshold document and consider any referral to statutory services (and the police) as appropriate.

14. Peer on peer abuse/child on child abuse

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education, [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges guidance](#) and local [multi-agency safeguarding children procedures](#), in particular [Children who Present a Risk of Harm to Others](#) as well as those outlined within our school Safeguarding Policy when managing reports and supporting victims of peer-on-peer abuse.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately.

The school recognises that during the restricted attendance at school during national lockdown, a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Concerns and actions must be recorded and appropriate referrals made.

15. Domestic Abuse

The current Covid 19 measures being taken are likely to increase the stress on family life and domestic abuse incidents have been reported to have risen.

The school will continue to receive domestic abuse notifications via the Stopping Domestic Abuse Together (SDAT) initiative as will children's social care. Notifications will continue to be recorded in the children's safeguarding file.

As with any concern about a child the school will take steps to ensure the child is safe. In all cases the school will review what we know about the child and their family.

If the child is expected to attend school the usual checks should be made on their welfare:

- What is known about the child when they arrived (or not) at school today?
- Who in the school needs to be informed?
- What 'checks' need to be carried out and how best can these be achieved?
- Are they in school today? How are they presenting physically and emotionally? Are there any changes in their behaviour?

When a child is not expected to be at school there should be consideration about how best the school can seek assurance on their welfare and what checks can be made.

In all cases the school will make general enquires with the child about how they are. The domestic abuse notification should not be referred to unless it is directly mentioned by the child or where the parent/carer raises the issue.

If the DSL/Deputy DSL identifies any child protection concerns they will refer to children's social care.

Children's Social Care will also review the incident and will liaise with the school where there are child protection concerns about the safety of the child.

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 contact plan and risk assessment is in place for that child or young person.

Details of this plan must be recorded, as should a record of contacts that have been made.

16. Safeguarding induction and training

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training (including online safety) and have read at least Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020). We will make sure staff and volunteers are aware of changes to our procedures and local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive:

- A safeguarding induction (including online safety)
- A copy of our children protection safeguarding policy (and this addendum)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (part 1)

We will decide on a case-by-case basis what level of safeguarding induction staff 'on loan' need. In most cases, this will be:

- A copy of our safeguarding policy and this addendum
- Confirmation of local processes
- Confirmation of DSL arrangements

The school acknowledges that opportunities for safeguarding training may be restricted during this period. DDSCP safeguarding face to face training events have been cancelled up to the end of June 2021, however virtual training will be taking place and there is the option of online safeguarding learning opportunities and podcasts. See DDSCP website [training pages](#).

17. Keeping records of who's on site

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current environment, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that any school or college 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, the school will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

The SCR will provide the means to log everyone that will be working or volunteering in a school on any given day, including any staff who may be on loan from other institutions. The SCR will be used to log details of any risk assessments carried out on volunteers and staff on loan from elsewhere.

18. 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, our school policies and the local multi-agency safeguarding children procedures, [Managing Allegations against Staff, Carers and Volunteers](#).

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately.

The school will continue to follow the legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult. We will also continue to refer potential cases of teacher misconduct to the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Staff absence

Where the school has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – they will discuss them immediately with the Governing Board.

19. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local safeguarding partners, other relevant agencies or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 3 to 4 weeks.