



South Gloucestershire Council

Longwell Green Primary School

Safeguarding Policy COVID Addendum

"Inspiring learning."

Introduction

Please read alongside our standard safeguarding policy.

Schools have closed to most pupils as part of a national lockdown from 5 January 2021.

Parents/carers are asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response and for children who are regarded as vulnerable (see below). All primary schools, secondary schools and colleges have been instructed to move to remote learning.

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects, where applicable, updated advice from the DfE, Government, Local Authority and all other safeguarding partners.

Core safeguarding principles

Longwell Green Primary School continues to follow the statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/912592/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_Sep_2020.pdf

On 27th March 2020, the government published safeguarding guidance for schools, colleges and other providers. Whilst Keeping Children Safe in Education remains the key statutory documents for schools, the DfE have issued interim guidance during the coronavirus outbreak. Government guidance can be found here:

<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>

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

- 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;
- Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) is available at all times;
- Children must continue to be protected when they are online.

Reporting concerns

All staff must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately, concerns they encounter both when in school and when interacting with pupils remotely. It is vitally important to do this. For staff, the reporting model is well known and is that they should contact either the DSL or DDSL as soon as possible and ensure that this is done. This can happen at any time of day or night. Concerns should also continue to be logged using CPOMs and staff should follow up concerns with the DSL and DDSL. All staff will continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

Any pupils or parents who have welfare or safeguarding concerns should contact us via telephone 01454 866460 or email enquiries@longwellgreenprimaryschool.co.uk or make use of classroom dojo to confidentially pass this information to school as soon as possible. Please be aware that Teams may share information to the entire class unless the correct settings are made by the parent or child when composing the message, so we suggest that other methods are used.

If pupils or parents are in immediate danger, they need to contact the police on 999.

Vulnerable Children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans. Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child Protection Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority are also classed as vulnerable. A child may also be deemed vulnerable if they otherwise meet the definition section 17 of the Children Act 1989. All those with an EHC plan will be encouraged to attend school and will be risk assessed in consultation to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

Eligibility for Free School Meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Places at Longwell Green have been offered to students who meet the DfE's definition of a 'vulnerable student', as made clear in the guidance. Children of key workers have also been offered a place.

Longwell Green Primary School also has the option to offer places in school to children who don't meet the Department for Education's definition of 'vulnerable', but who we have safeguarding concerns about or who are vulnerable because of other reasons identified by our staff. Longwell Green will work closely with parents/carers to decide what is best in each individual circumstance. If these pupils will not be attending school, Longwell Green has a contact plan that will be put in place, see below.

Longwell Green Primary School 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 (VSH) for looked-after (LAC) and previously looked after children (PLAC).

Longwell Green Primary School recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances can affect the mental health of students and their parents/carers. Staff at Longwell Green are aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home and keep in close contact with families to ensure that there is a joined up and supportive approach.

Contact plan

Longwell Green Primary School has a contact plan for pupils with a social worker and for students where there are safeguarding concerns, for circumstances where:

- They won't be attending school (for example where the school, parent/carer and social 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.

The contact plan is also followed for any pupil who is looked after, has an EHCP, or is vulnerable for any other reason as identified by staff.

This plan is:

- as a minimum a child deemed as vulnerable will be contacted weekly through a mixture of using the learning platform, via telephone calls or video calls by the teacher who knows them best. This may be more frequent depending on the individual circumstances.
- Where concerns are escalating, contact will move from the class teacher to one of the SLT, usually the DSL or DDSL. Concerns will continue to follow the usual safeguarding process, see below.
- We use a mixture of phone calls and Teams live meetings where we aim to speak with the child and if possible the parent as well. These contacts are logged and details of any subsequent concerns / actions or significant positives are recorded.

Any safeguarding concerns as a result of contact is referred appropriately by the member of staff who made the contact as detailed above.

Then if we cannot make contact, the next step depends on the level of risk or vulnerability. Home visits would be the next step and would be undertaken by the DSL / DDSL or class teacher, depending on the ascertained level of risk.

In consultation with the DSL and DDSL, the school may attempt to contact the relevant social worker or external agency that the pupil is working with, and failing that and depending on the risk and concern, either directly contact the police or ART (Access and Repose Team) for advice.

Safeguarding all children

Staff are aware that this challenging time potentially puts all children at greater risk. Staff will continue to be alert to any signs of abuse, or effects on pupils' mental health as well as all safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately. For pupils at home, they will look out for signs like:

- Not completing assigned work or logging on to school systems;
- No contact from pupils or families;
- Concerning or inappropriate comments to staff or to other pupils;
- Seeming more withdrawn during any video calls / phone calls.

Teachers communicate daily with pupils via the respective Teams page as well as a mixture of phone calls and live video meetings where we aim to speak with the child and if possible the parent as well. Details of any concerns / actions are logged and shared with the DSL and DDSL.

Where there are concerns, contact will move from the class teacher to one of the SLT, usually the DSL or DDSL. Concerns will continue to follow the usual safeguarding process.

Monitoring attendance

As most students will not be attending school during this period of school closure, Longwell Green will not be completing its usual attendance registers or following usual procedures to follow up on non-attendance, following the guidance from the Local Authority.

The exception to this is where any child staff expect to attend school during the closure doesn't attend, or stops attending. In these cases, the Office Team, under the guidance of the DSL, will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers by phoning the appropriate person;
- DSL / DDSL will notify their social worker, where they have one.

Longwell Green is using the DfE's daily online attendance form to keep an accurate record of who is attending school.

To support the above, Longwell Green Primary School will when communicating with parents/carers, confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency numbers where they are available.

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. The section above entitled Reporting concerns provide details of how pupils and parents with any concerns including peer-on-peer abuse, can contact us.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately about both pupils attending school and those at home, as made clear above. Concerns will be thoroughly investigated and referred as necessary.

Concerns about a staff member

As stated, at Longwell Green we will continue to follow the principles set out in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education and the procedures in our main safeguarding policy. Where staff are interacting with children online they will continue to follow the existing staff code of conduct, as they would working in school.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately, whether those concerns are about staff working on site or remotely. Staff act on these concerns by contacting the **Headteacher**, and not the DDSL or any other member of staff.

If staff have concerns about the Headteacher, they should contact the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer), Tina Wilson 01454 868508 Email LADO@southglos.gov.uk

If parents have any safeguarding concerns about a member of staff, they should contact the Headteacher. If investigations need to be carried out during this time, they will be carried out following the guidance and advice of the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) and other appropriate agencies as we would when not in lockdown.

Online safety

At school, we continue to provide a safe environment, including online through existing online safety policies. This includes the use of an internet filtering system / firewall and monitoring of pupil activity. Where pupils are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place and messages of online safety will continue to be shared with these pupils by supervising staff, in addition to explicit online safety lessons that happen throughout the year at all ages as part of our computing curriculum.

Where school has lent devices to pupils / families, the family has been asked to sign an acceptable use agreement.

As a school we have made parents aware of:

- the potential risks to pupils online and the importance of staying safe online,
- what we are asking pupils to do online, including who they will be interacting with from school;
- where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online.

Where pupils are online learning as part of school remote learning, then there is an expectation that the adults of the household will monitor any online activity not within our learning platform Teams and follow online safety rules. Parents have been reminded of these through newsletter communication. Staff will monitor the online activity within the platform Teams.

Online safety – staff: lessons and digital communication

At Longwell Green we 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 online lessons or using digital communication:

- Communication should take place within regular school hours, unless in exceptional circumstances.
- These communications may only take place on official (monitored) school systems. Personal email addresses, text messaging or calls from personal phones, interacting via social media, must not be used for any communications.
- Permission must be sought from the school SLT before scheduling or delivering any online lessons with students (I.e., it is permitted within school policy).
- All live lessons/meetings must use MS Teams, and no other platform (e.g. Zoom, Skype, Hangouts).
- Video calls/meetings/lessons should not 1:1 between a teacher and pupil unless explicit agreement has been sought via SLT. There are occasional times when this is appropriate and in which case, suitable safeguards will be put in place. For the most part, this is not a model that Longwell Green will use.
- 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. If this is not possible, then the background should be blurred. This is also the case if there are any photographs, posters, pictures, etc. which might identify others, give away personal information about the staff member or not be appropriate for pupils to see.
- The majority of interactions should be pre-recorded.
- Language and actions of all involved must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.

The LGFL has produced the following which gives good advice and support:

<https://coronavirus.lgfl.net/safeguarding>

Mental health

We care deeply about our pupils and our community. We aim to support positive mental health in a wide range of ways, through regular signposting of support, through regular check ins, through personalised support and through the use of external agencies when appropriate, amongst many other approaches. Directly linked to lockdown safeguarding, 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 will monitor mental health through daily interactions with pupils and families and follow the route of concern as described above if they have concerns of any kind, including those involving mental health.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as further guidance emerges, or if any aspect of this policy changes, for example if the type of remote learning changes.

The below is from the main policy, but may be of use as a quick reference:

The designated senior member of staff (DSL or DSL) for child protection in this school is:

Mr Darren Brown (Headteacher)

In their absence, these matters will be dealt with by (Dep DSL):

Mrs Sarah Darling (Deputy Headteacher)
Or Charlotte Lock Senior Teacher, fully trained and SENCo.

The DSL is key to ensuring that proper procedures and policies are in place and are followed with regard to child safeguarding issues. They will also act as a dedicated resource available for other staff, volunteers and governors to draw upon.

The designated person is key to ensuring that proper procedures and policies are in place and are followed with regard to child safeguarding issues. They will also act as a dedicated resource available for other staff, volunteers and governors to draw upon.

They will:

- Act as a source of advice, support and expertise within the school and be responsible for coordinating action regarding referrals by liaising with Children's Social care and other relevant agencies over suspicions that a child may be suffering harm.
- Cascade safeguarding advice and guidance issued by South Gloucestershire's Children's Partnership Board.
- Where they have concerns that a referral has not been dealt with in accordance with the child protection procedures, refer to the Safeguarding Children Strategic manager of SGCPB to investigate further.
- Ensure each member of staff and volunteers at the school, and regular visitors (such as Education Welfare Officers, trainee teachers and supply teachers) are aware of and can access readily, this policy.
- Liaise with the head teacher (if not head teacher) to inform him/her of any issues and ongoing investigations and ensure there is always cover for the role.
- Ensure that this policy is updated and reviewed annually and work with the designated governor for child protection regarding this.

- Be able to keep detailed accurate secure written records of referrals/concerns, and ensure that these are held in a secure place.
- Ensure parents are aware of the child protection policy in order to alert them to the fact that the school may need to make referrals. Raising parents' awareness may avoid later conflict if the school does have to take appropriate action to safeguard a child.
- Where children leave the school roll, ensure any child protection file is transferred to the new school as soon as possible, separately from the main file, and addressed to the designated person for child protection.
- Where a child leaves and the new school is not known, ensure that the local authority is alerted so that the child's name can be included on the database for missing pupils. The designated person also has an important role in ensuring all staff and volunteers receive appropriate training.

Designated governor

Designated governor

The Designated Governor/S for Child Protection and Safeguarding are:

Pam Blackmore

<http://sites.southglos.gov.uk/safeguarding/children> Local Authority advice.

Further advice from surrounding local Authorities

www.swcpp.org.uk