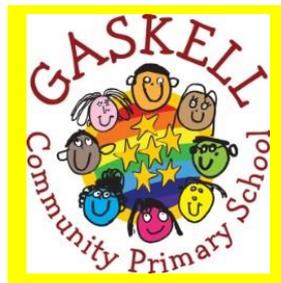


Child protection and safeguarding: COVID-19 addendum

Gaskell CP School



Approved by:	Miss E Kirk	Date: 21.4.20
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Important contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Mrs Kath Wright	wrightk@gaskell.bolton.sch.uk 07801 949545
Deputy DSL	Miss Emily Kirk	01204 333666
Designated member of Senior Leadership team if DSL (and deputy) can't be on site	Miss Sarah Barlow	01204 333666
Headteacher	Miss Emily Kirk	01204 333666
Referral and Assessment	MASSS	01204 331500
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Mr Colin Jones	01204 337474 colin.jones@bolton.gov.uk
Chair of governors	Miss Pat Hinchsliff	01204 333666

1. Scope and definitions

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from our 3 local safeguarding partners: Bolton Clinical Commissioning Group, Greater Manchester Police and Bolton Local Authority (LA).

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance [Coronavirus: safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers](#), and should be read in conjunction with that policy.

Unless covered here, our normal child protection policy continues to apply.

The Department for Education's (DfE's) definition of 'vulnerable children' includes 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

2. Core safeguarding principles

We will still have regard to the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

Although we are operating in a different way to normal, we are 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
- › 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 must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this, both for children still attending school and those at home.

Our DSL will regularly make welfare phone calls to our most vulnerable families if they are not attending school and will then update their Social Workers accordingly. This may also be to families that Gaskell deem as vulnerable who don't have a Social Worker.

As a reminder, Bolton's MASSS continue to run the 'Front door' for all new referrals where there are concerns that children are at risk of significant harm. Details of all important contacts are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements

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

We will keep all school staff informed by a GROUP CHAT if anything changes from day to day with regard to DSL contact name / details.

There will always be a Senior Leader available who will be responsible for liaising with the 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 necessary
- › Refer to Bolton's MASSS, where necessary for any new referrals

5. 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 3 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:

Children who have a Social Worker

All children with a Bolton Council Social Worker have received a Covid-19 Risk Assessment by Children's Social Care. This will identify them as either of the following: -

- Red significant risk of harm - the child needs to be seen every 2 weeks or more often by a Social Care Professional
- Amber Moderate risk to emotional wellbeing - the child needs to be seen every 4 weeks by a Social Care Professional
- Green Low risk of any harm coming to the child - the child should be seen in relation to the current statutory guidance for their status and in discussion with the Team Manager the visit may be made by phone/video call

These RAG ratings are simply a tool to assist in the identification of those most at risk and the prioritisation for agency visits. The process is likely to vary on a week by week and indeed day by day basis.

An updated list will be sent to Gaskell every Monday detailing children who have a Bolton Council Social Worker. This will detail whether they are expected to attend school.

If a child is confirmed as not expecting to attend the Social Worker will have identified one of the following reasons;

A1 – Family are self-isolating

A2 – the child/young person has been identified as having symptoms of COVID-19

A3 – A household member has been identified as having symptoms of COVID-19

A4 – child has not been offered an education provision

A5 – Child not attending school – parent or child refusing provision offered.

If a child is expected to attend and does not arrive that morning, we will;

- Contact the family and understand why the child has not attended school that day
- Contact the Social Worker directly or duty contacts if there are any issues contacting the Social Worker

6. Monitoring attendance

As most children will not be attending school during this period of school closure, we will not be completing our usual attendance registers or following our usual procedures to follow up on non-attendance.

The exception to this is where any child we expect to attend school during the closure doesn't attend, or stops attending. In these cases, we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents by welfare phone calls made by the DSL
- Notify their Social Worker, where they have one

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

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 will continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – about both children attending school and those at home.

Welfare phone calls will be made where necessary to support victims of peer-on-peer abuse by the DSL, deputy DSL or Senior Leader on site, where appropriate.

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 will continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – whether those concerns are about staff working on site or remotely and should follow existing Safeguarding & Child Protection policy.

After following the "first five minutes" guidance, if the LADO deems that the threshold for further investigation is met, then this will be carried out by the Headteacher.

The LADO's contact details are listed in the 'Important contacts' section at the start of this addendum.

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. Support for children where we have concerns

We have 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. We will work with parents/carers to do this. This may be for example children who have had historic Social Worker involvement or often need that little bit of extra school support.

If these children are not attending school, contact plans are in place, as explained in section 10 below.

10. Contact plans

Our contact plans for children with a Social Worker are explicitly outlined in Section 5.

The DSL will make contact at least twice a week over the phone, sometimes daily where required and if agreed with their Social Worker.

Contact plans will be reviewed weekly. If we can't make contact, we will contact children's social care or the police.

Support for children where we have concerns, but they do not have a Social Worker, will receive regular phone calls from the DSL and may be invited into school at the Headteacher's discretion in order to continue to safeguard them.

From week to week and even day to day, as school closure continues, this list of children that school contact is likely to change and may increase.

11. Safeguarding all children

Staff are aware that this difficult 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 that are also safeguarding concerns, and act on concerns immediately in line with the procedures set out in section 3 above.

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

Children are likely to be spending more time online during this period – see section 12 below for our approach to online safety both in and outside school.

See section 13 below for information on how we will support pupils' mental health.

12. Online safety

12.1 In school

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

If IT staff are unavailable, our contingency plan is support from Bolton Schools' ICT – Rob Pelham/John Entwistle)

12.2 Outside school

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

School Staff need to continue to be vigilant about their use of social media and to only interact with children using approved and whole-school endorsed technologies, enabling recommended safety features where required.

Staff should not interact in voice or video calls with pupils alone. Video calls will only be practised with multiple participants and if ringing homes, staff should ensure that parents are present or on loud speaker.

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.

13.3 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 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 by regularly signposting them to nationally recognised and endorsed websites and resources

13. Mental health

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils. The DSL will add families needing support to the contact plan where necessary.

We will also signpost all pupils, parents 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.

14. Staff recruitment, training and induction

14.1 Recruiting new staff

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that adults 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.

In urgent cases, when validating proof of identity documents to apply for a DBS check, we will initially accept verification of scanned documents via online video link, rather than being in physical possession of the original documents. This approach is in line with revised guidance from the DBS.

New staff must still present the original documents when they first attend work at our school.

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 167-172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

14.2 Staff 'on loan' from other schools

We will assess the risks of staff 'on loan' working in our school, and seek assurance from the 'loaning' school that staff have had the appropriate checks. [Alison Rafferty, School Business Manager, will do these risk assessments.]

We will also use the DBS Update Service, where these staff have signed up to it, to check for any new information.

14.3 Safeguarding induction and training

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

New staff will continue to receive:

- A safeguarding induction
- A copy of our children protection policy (and this addendum)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1
- Updates on any changes to day to day DSL contact names / details

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 child protection policy and this addendum
- Confirmation of local processes
- Confirmation of DSL arrangements

14.4 Keeping records of who's on site

We will keep a record of which staff are on site each day, and that appropriate checks have been carried out for them.

We will continue to keep our single central record up to date.

A weekly rota will be updated and shared with staff detailing who should be working on site and staff should continue to log in as normal on entry to the school building.

15. 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, child in need plan, child protection plan or personal education plan
- Details of the child's Social Worker
- Details of the virtual school head

Where the DSL, deputy or SENCO can't share this information, the Senior Leader(s) identified in section 4 will do this.

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

16. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 4 weeks by Kath Wright (DSL). At every review, it will be approved by the Headteacher and Chair of Governors

17. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child protection policy
- Staff code of conduct
- IT acceptable use policy
- Health and safety policy
- Online safety policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- <https://www.boltonsafeguardingchildren.org.uk/downloads/file/170/bolton-safeguarding-children-arrangements-during-covid-19>