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EXETER CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

Nursery | Pre-Prep | Prep

COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Exeter Cathedral School

- Date ratified by governors: April 2020
- Date shared with staff: April 2020

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1.0 Context

This appendix has been developed in response to and aligned to DfE guidance <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> published 27th March 2020.

From 20th March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for vulnerable children and those of workers critical to the COVID-19 response who absolutely need to attend.

Schools and all childcare providers were asked to provide care for a limited number of children –

- children who are vulnerable (see para 2), and
- children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

This appendix of the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements during this period of time and is likely to be reviewed at regular intervals particularly when new advice is released by the LA or DfE.

It remains the case that safeguarding is everybody’s responsibility, therefore this additional information needs to be shared with all staff and volunteers who in turn must read and seek support from the DSL team or school leaders if further clarification is required. All staff should continue to have access to the Child Protection policy, Code of Conduct and KCSiE 2019 where further details and information can be found.

The schools’ safeguarding team (DSL, DDSLs, Safeguarding Governor) and their contact details can be found in the main body of the Schools Safeguarding Policy and below. Any changes will be shared with all staff and volunteers of the school.

Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Sarah Reddington	07545 353811	s.reddington@exetercs.org
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	James Featherstone	07852 516774	j.m.featherstone@exetercs.org
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and nominated lead for Nursery and Pre-Prep	Liz Bowles	07900 518743	e.bowles@exetercs.org
Chair of Governors	Derek Phillips		d.phillips@exetercs.org
Safeguarding Governor	Mark Sugden		m.sugden@exetercs.org

2.0 Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker (including children in care) and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care plans (EHCPs). A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed (by the school, or other professional) as being in need or otherwise meet the definition in section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Those with an EHC plan will be risk-assessed in consultation with the SENDCO and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school or college place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary and available, carers, therapists or clinicians visiting the home to provide any essential services. Many children and young people with EHC plans can safely remain at home.

Exeter Cathedral 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 head (VSH) for looked-after and previously looked-after children. If current plans and support packages exist for these pupils the school will continue to provide for these as best as possible in conjunction with the relevant agencies. The lead person for this will be Sarah Reddington.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies) know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children’s social care support.

Exeter Cathedral School must also consider the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and all other children attending the setting. If a child is unwell, or showing the symptoms of Covid -19 (as defined by current government guidelines) they will expect the child to remain at home and the school will offer provision and support remotely informing relevant partner agencies. This will include establishing regular contact with the family until such time as they have adhered to guidelines enabling the now well or symptom free child to return to school.

2.1 Attendance monitoring

As the majority of children will not be attending school the usual procedures for monitoring attendance will not apply. However, once registration has closed each day we will follow up on any child who is booked to attend and is not present.

School will complete a return online so the DfE can monitor who is in school and who isn't by midday everyday https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings?utm_source=15dbdd08-0355-41cd-a731-77d42d9cf9a9&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate

The LA has a duty to monitor vulnerable children's attendance and the Headmasters pa (or other member of staff in her absence) will be completing the necessary spreadsheets and returning to schoolsdailyreturns@devon.gov.uk daily.

2.2 Those vulnerable children not attending school

Those vulnerable children who are not attending school will be contacted on a regular basis so that school are satisfied that they are safe and. School will follow the Devon Schools Safeguarding of Vulnerable Children During Covid 19 flowchart along with that from other agencies working with the pupil and family. The DSL or Deputy DSL will review their RAG ratings for this group at least weekly taking into account any reported concerns from school contact or any information from partner agencies such as ViST reports. Any changes will be recorded on the schools central vulnerable group spreadsheet and shared with the DSL team. **Any changes in the RAG rating will be sent to the LA on this link so the master records can be updated. schoolsdailyreturns@devon.gov.uk**

3.0 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The optimal scenario is to have the DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case the DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example when working from home. Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, a senior leader will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site. This might include updating and managing access to child protection records and liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and as required liaising with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at the school or college.

Any changes to the Safeguarding team details will also be shared with Babcock LDP and Devon County Council.

4.0 Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the school Safeguarding Policy, this includes making a report via CPOMS which can be done remotely. In the event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Headmaster. This will ensure that the concern is received. Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concern to the Headmaster. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Headmaster whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the Headmaster immediately.

Concerns around the Headmaster should be directed to the Chair of Governors, Derek Phillips.

5.0 Safeguarding training and induction

DSL training is **very unlikely** to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID 19 virus. 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) even if they have or will miss their refresher training. All existing school staff who have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019), are similarly likely to not receive whole staff training during this time. DSLs will communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child. This should be achieved through emails and similar electronic means including Microsoft Teams.

Where new staff or volunteers are recruited they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction electronically.

6.0 Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

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, Exeter Cathedral School will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) (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. Where Exeter Cathedral School are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of KCSIE. Under **no circumstances** will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Exeter Cathedral School 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. Full details can be found at paragraph 163 of KCSIE. Exeter Cathedral School 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 should 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 any school 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, Exeter Cathedral School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

7.0 Online safety in schools and colleges

Exeter Cathedral School will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system. Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

7.1 Children and online safety away from school and college

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk or suffering abuse. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Child Protection Policy. Referrals should still be made to MASH/social worker and as required, to the police. Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the code of conduct.

Exeter Cathedral School will 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 virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- No 1:1s, groups only, unless as a result of risk assessments confirmed with the Headmaster. This may for example involve having the parent in the room.

- 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.
- The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Live classes should be kept to the allocated slot on the timetable.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must conduct on-line lessons through the timetable set up on Microsoft Teams.

7.2 Online safety at home

School will continue to support parents, sharing online safety information, websites and resources for them to utilise in school communications and updates. E.g. links to CEOPs, ThinkUKnow.

8.0 Supporting children not in school

Exeter Cathedral School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children. 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 will ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person. Details of this plan must be recorded on CPOMS, as should a record of contact have made. The communication plans can include; remote contact and phone contact. The plans put in place will as a minimum reflect the Devon Schools Safeguarding of Vulnerable Children During Covid 19 flowchart. Other individualised contact methods should be carefully considered, ideally working with families, and recorded.

Exeter Cathedral School and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan. Any such plan must be reviewed at least fortnightly and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate. The school will share safeguarding messages with parents and guardians. Exeter Cathedral School recognises 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 and carers.

All staff need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home. Exeter Cathedral 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 will be bespoke to each child and recorded. Exeter Cathedral School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students. We will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish.

9.0 Supporting children in school

The Headmaster will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety. Exeter Cathedral School will continually refer to the most recent 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. Where staff have concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – they discuss them immediately with senior leaders.

10.0 Peer on Peer Abuse

Exeter Cathedral School 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 of the 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 must be recorded and appropriate referrals made.