COVID 19 Example Safeguarding Policy Statement (Guidance from the DfE issued on 27/3/20 and 20/5/20)

Date: 30/3/20

Review dates: 31/3/20, 21/5/20

Introduction

Christ Church (Church of England) Infant School and Nursery and Christ Church (Church of England) Junior School are open for children of key/critical workers and vulnerable children, as part of the country's ongoing response to coronavirus.

From the week commencing 1 June at the earliest, our school will welcome back children in nursery, Reception, and year 6.

Vulnerable children for the purposes of continued attendance during the coronavirus outbreak are those across all year groups who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children 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 and it is determined, following risk assessment (risk assessment guidance), that their needs can be as safely or more safely met in the educational environment
- have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued attendance. This might include children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services, adopted children, those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training'), those living in temporary accommodation, those who are young carers and others at the provider and local authority's discretion

Our senior leaders, especially Designated Safeguarding Leads (and deputies) know who our most vulnerable children are and have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edges of receiving children's social care support.

All staff will continue to act in the best interests of all children, if anyone in our schools has a safeguarding concern about any child they will act immediately and contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads in person, by phone, e-mail or skype/facetime or similar.

Our school continues to have regard to the Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2019 Guidance in particular, part 1, part 3 - safer recruitment, part 4- management of allegations and part 5 -dealing with peer on peer abuse, child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment, online safety and other forms of peer on peer abuse. Our school will continue to apply the principles and follow the procedures outlined in the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 guidance

Continued vigilance and referrals

As we welcome more children back to school all staff understand the continued importance of acting immediately on any safeguarding concerns, including new concerns where children are returning to school. Our school is aware that some families may have experienced and continue to experience challenging circumstances during the Covid-19 pandemic, we will continue to support families and children making appropriate referrals through the well establish referral systems in place. Our school will make every effort to encourage parents and carers to advise us of any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing that they should be aware of as their child/ren return/s to school.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure all relevant safeguarding and welfare information held on all children (including returning children) remains accurate and up to date.

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads, deputies or senior leaders continue to follow all local procedures, we will continue to refer all concerns through the well- established channels e.g. Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Strengthening Families Teams, the Channel Panel etc.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads and Designated Teacher will continue to work closely with and inform Virtual School Headteachers, if they have any concerns regarding our children and young people in care and children and young people who were previously in care.

The Wolverhampton MASH is still fully operational and, at the current time, continues to accept all levels of referral. If we are experiencing any issues in getting in touch with Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) our school will contact Helen Patten - helen.patten@wolverhampton.gov.uk

The safeguarding service are also continuing to hold initial and review child protection conferences; however, these will be done virtually or by submission of a report, our school will continue to contribute to these meetings. If we have any issues, our school will contact Nicola Hale - nicola.hale@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Our school has made appropriate arrangements (E.g. phone calls, e-mail, text messaging, video calls) to maintain contact with children not physically attending the school, we maintain contact to support learning and to support children's welfare and health including mental health. We keep a record of all calls and contact with families and colleagues.

Our school will continue to contact parents remotely where possible and continue with the well-established practice of contacting colleagues in the Inclusion Support Team, Strengthening Families Team or the link social worker if we have concerns about a child or family and refer to the MASH in the usual way.

During the current Covid-19 pandemic our school will only undertake home visits in 'exceptional circumstances.' We will only make a home visit if it is 'essential and necessary.' Senior leaders will determine the most appropriate method of contact, if it is determined that a home visit is 'essential and necessary,' staff will adhere to DfE guidance.

For children and young people with an education, health and care (EHC) plan, our school will undertake a risk assessment in liaison with parents/carers and the local authority to determine whether children should continue to attend school or not. The purpose of this is both to identify those children and young people who should continue to attend in order that their education, health and care needs are met and to identify what support needs a child or young person may have if they are remaining at home. Our school will use the risk assessment tool developed by the local authority, for all children and young people with an EHC plan, the risk assessment will also be completed for children and young people who do not have an EHC plan, but are either undergoing an EHC needs assessment, or receive additional high needs funding to support them in a setting.

Role of the Designated, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads and Senior Leaders

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mrs S Blower

Infant and Nursery

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mrs R Lunn and Mrs S McHale

Junior School

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:Mrs J Nash and Mrs J Stroudley

Keeping children Safe in Education September 2019 states: During term time the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) will always be available (during school or college hours) for staff in the school or college to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) is expected to be available in person, it is a matter for individual schools and colleges, working with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, to define what "available" means and whether in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Skype or other such media is acceptable. It is a matter for individual schools and colleges and the Designated Safeguarding lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

The optimal scenario for our schools in providing care for children is to have a trained DSL or deputy available on site. This may not always be possible, and where this is the case there are 2 options we will consider:

- a trained DSL or deputy from each school will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example working from home
- sharing trained DSLs or deputies with the other school in our Federation.

If our DSL or deputy is not on site, in addition to one of the above options, our school will require a senior leader to take responsibility for coordinating safeguarding on site. This might include updating and managing access to child protection files, 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 our schools.

Our DSLs (and deputies) will continue to do what they reasonably can to keep up to date with safeguarding developments, such as via safeguarding partners, newsletters and professional advice groups.

Attendance

The government's expectation is that vulnerable children's attendance is 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), so that they can gain the educational and wellbeing benefits of attending. Vulnerable children – regardless of year group – that have not been attending in the recent period are expected to return to nursery, early years, school or college provision where this would now be appropriate for them to do so. We will work with and support other relevant partners to support our families and pupils to return to school or college, where attendance is appropriate.

for vulnerable children who have a social worker, attendance is expected unless the child/household is shielding or clinically vulnerable (see the advice set out by Public Health England on households with possible coronavirus infection and shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as clinically extremely vulnerable

- for vulnerable children who have an education health and care (EHC) plan, attendance is expected where it is determined, following risk assessment, that their needs can be as safely or more safely met in the educational environment
- for vulnerable children who are deemed otherwise vulnerable, at the school, college or local authority discretion, attendance is expected unless the child/household is shielding or clinically vulnerable (see the advice set out by Public Health England on households with possible coronavirus infection and shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as clinically extremely vulnerable

We will continue to notify social workers where children with a social worker do not attend. We will also continue to follow up with any parent or carer whose child has been expected to attend and doesn't. To support the above, we will take the opportunity when communicating with parents and carers to confirm emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

We will resume taking our attendance register from 1 June and continue to complete the online Educational Setting Status form

Health and safety risk assessment

Our school has completed a health and safety risk assessment with the support of the LA to ensure a safe phased return of children to school.

Training

At Christ Church we understand that DSL training is very unlikely to take place during this period (although the option of online training may be explored). For the period COVID-19 measures are in place, our DSL (or deputy) who has been trained will continue to be classed as a trained DSL (or deputy) even if they miss their refresher training.

All existing school staff already have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of KCSIE and our school's safeguarding policy. This appendix will be made available to all existing staff, governors and volunteers to ensure they are aware of the new arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

If new staff are recruited, or new volunteers enter our school, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction. An up to date safeguarding/child protection policy (described above) will support this process as will part 1 of KCSIE.

Our existing school staff may move between schools on a temporary basis in response to COVID-19. The receiving school should judge, on a case-by-case basis, the level of safeguarding induction required. In most cases, the existing staff will already have received appropriate safeguarding training and all they will require is a copy of the receiving setting's child protection policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

Our school will continue to seek advice from the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together training co-ordinator and use the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together website to keep up to date with any local training offer and information.

https://www.wolverhamptonsafeguarding.org.uk/

If a child must attend another setting:

If a child is attending another school because they are unable to attend their own school, the Designated Safeguarding Leads at the home school should liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Leads at the host school to share information about children attending the host school. The host should be aware of the reason the child is vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them. As a minimum the host school should, as appropriate, have access to a vulnerable child's EHC plan, child in need plan, child protection plan or, for looked-after children, their personal education plan and know who the child's social worker (and, for looked-after children, who the responsible Virtual School Headteacher is). This should ideally happen before a child arrives and, where that is not possible as soon as reasonably practicable. Any exchanges of information will ideally happen at DSL (or deputy) level, and likewise between special educational needs coordinators/named individual with oversight of SEN provision for children with EHC plans. However, it is acknowledged this may not always be possible. Where this is the case our senior leaders will take responsibility. Host schools should also obtain information regarding emergency contact information and an additional emergency contact number, any dietary needs, medical needs or allergies for each child and any other relevant information regarding those children. If the host school has any concerns about children attending their school from a home school, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will raise and share their concerns with the home school immediately and liaise with the social worker if required.

Whilst our school and college will continue to have appropriate regard to data protection and GDPR we will not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff

At Christ Church we understand it is essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. If our school must recruit new staff, we will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for our setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of 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. The Home Office and Immigration Enforcement have also temporarily adjusted the right to work checks due to the coronavirus outbreak. Our school will follow all the procedures outlined by DBS and in the Home Office guidance

During this current period if our school uses 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 would we allow a volunteer who has not been checked to be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

Existing staff engaging in regulated activity already have the appropriate DBS check, we understand there is no expectation that a new DBS check should be obtained where that member of the staff temporarily moves to another school or college to support the care of children. The type of setting on the DBS check, for example a specific category of school, is not a barrier. The same principle applies if childcare workers move to work temporarily in a school setting. If we are a host school, we will risk assess as we would for a volunteer (see above). Our school understands the onus remains on us to satisfy ourselves that anyone in our setting has the required checks, including as required those set out in part 3 of KCSIE, in the above scenario this can be achieved, if the host school chooses to, via seeking assurance from the home school rather than requiring new checks.

Our school will continue to liaise and seek advice from our Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if we have any concerns – Paul Cooper 01902 550661

Our school will continue to follow our 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.

Our 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 will be made by emailing Misconduct.Teacher@education.gov.uk. All referrals received by the TRA will continue to be considered. Where referrals on serious safeguarding matters are received and it is deemed that there is a public interest in doing so consideration will be given as to whether an interim prohibition order (IPO) should be put in place. The TRA will continue to progress all cases but will not schedule any hearings at the current time.

Whilst acknowledging the challenge of the current environment, it is essential from a safeguarding perspective that our schools are aware, on any given day, which staff/volunteers will be in the schools, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, our schools will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE. The SCR can, if the schools choose, provide the means to log everyone that will be working or volunteering in our schools on any given day, including any staff who may be on loan from other settings. The SCR can also, if a school or college chooses, be used to log details of any risk assessments carried out on volunteers and staff on loan from elsewhere.

Mental health

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. Our school is aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

The DfE has provided separate guidance on remote education practices during the coronavirus outbreak our school will refer to this guidance.

Whilst we are providing for children of critical workers and vulnerable children on site and as more children return to school from 1 June our schools will ensure appropriate support is in place for them. Our school will have regard to the DfE guidance on mental health and behaviour in schools which sets out how mental health issues can bring about changes in a young person's behaviour or emotional state which can be displayed in a range of different ways, all of which could be an indication of an underlying problem, This can include for example being fearful or withdrawn; aggressive or oppositional; or excessive clinginess. Support for children in the current circumstances may include existing provision within our school (although this may be delivered in different ways, for example over the phone for those children still not attending provision) or from specialist staff or support services.

Guidance on mental health and behaviour in schools.

Online safety in our schools

E-safety IT lead: Infants and Nursery – Miss D Oakley, Juniors – Miss H Cox

At Christ Church we understand that it will be more important than ever that our schools provide a safe environment, including online. Our schools will continue to ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems (read guidance on what "appropriate" looks like) are in place to protect children when they are online on our schools IT systems or recommended resources. Our schools will consider who in our institution has the technical knowledge to maintain safe IT arrangements. Our schools will also consider what our contingency arrangements are if our IT/E-safety staff become unavailable.

The UK Council for Internet Safety provides information to help governing boards and proprietors assure themselves that any new arrangements continue to effectively safeguard children online.

The UK Safer Internet Centre's professional online safety helpline also provides support for the children's workforce with any online safety issues they face. We will also contact out IT provider for assistance if required.

The NSPCC Learning website also provides useful support and training opportunities for professionals

Children and online safety away from school and college

At Christ Church we are doing what we reasonably can to keep all our children safe. In most cases, the majority of our children are not physically attending our schools. We understand that 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 will be dealt with as per our safeguarding/child protection policy and where appropriate referrals will be made to children's social care and as required the police.

The DfE has provided separate guidance on providing education remotely guidance on safeguarding and remote education to support schools and colleges plan lessons safely. Our school will refer to and apply the appropriate and relevant principles and procedures outlined in this guidance.

Virtual lessons and live streaming - We understand that there is no expectation that teachers should live stream or provide pre-recorded videos. Our school will consider the approaches that best suit the needs of our children and staff.

We will use the Guidance from the National Cyber Security Centre on which video conference service is right for you and using video conferencing services securely to inform our practice regarding setting up video conferencing safely, if we choose to use this method of delivering lessons.

In addition, we will also refer to, if required, the guidance from the UK Safer Internet Centre on safe remote learning includes detailed advice for real time online teaching and the London Grid for Learning safeguarding advice includes platform specific advice.

Our schools will consider the safety of our children when they are asked to work online. The starting point for online teaching should be that the same principles as set out in our schools' Staff Code of Conduct. This policy should amongst other things include acceptable use of technologies, staff pupil/student relationships and communication including the use of social media. The policy will apply equally to any existing or new online and distance learning arrangements which are introduced. Our schools will, as much as is reasonably possible, ensure that our existing policies adequately reflect the new reality of so many children (and in some cases staff) working remotely online. If required, as with our safeguarding/child protection policy, we may add an annex/addendum summarising key COVID-19 to our code of conduct or E-safety policy regarding changes. We may seek support from our local authority or independent consultant when planning online lessons/activities and considering online safety.

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

An essential part of the online planning process will be ensuring children who are being asked to work online have very clear reporting routes in place, so they can raise any concerns whilst online. As well as reporting routes back to our schools this should also signpost children to age appropriate practical support from the likes of:

- Childline - for support
- UK Safer Internet Centre - to report and remove harmful online content
- CEOP - for advice on making a report about online abuse

When our schools have contact with parents/carers (E.g. via phone calls, e-mails, text messaging, website etc.) we can reinforce the importance of children being safe online. We feel it is especially important for parents/carers to be aware of what their child/children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and be clear who from our schools (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online.

Parents/carers may choose to supplement the school/college online offer with support from online companies and in some cases individual tutors. In their communications with parents/carers, our school will make every effort to emphasise the importance of securing online support from a reputable organisation/individual who can provide evidence that they are safe and can be trusted to have access to children. Support for parents/carers to keep their children safe online includes:

- Internet matters - for support for parents/carers to keep their children safe online
- London Grid for Learning - for support for parents/carers to keep their children safe online
- Net-aware - for support for parents/carers from the NSPCC
- Parent info - for support for parents/ carers to keep their children safe online
- Thinkuknow - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- UK Safer Internet Centre - advice for parents/carers
- Childnet offers a toolkit to support parents and carers of children of any age to start discussions about their online life, to set boundaries around online behaviour and technology use, and to find out where to get more help and support
- Let's Talk About It has advice for parents and carers to keep children safe from online radicalisation

The Government has also provided the following guidance:

- support for parents and carers to keep children safe from online harms, includes advice about specific harms such as online child sexual abuse, sexting, and cyberbullying
- support to stay safe online includes security and privacy settings, blocking unsuitable content, and parental controls

Our school will continue to provide contact information and supportive information on our website for parents/carers by signposting to statutory agencies -Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together Website, MASH contact numbers and third sector agencies and other partners.

This policy will continue to be reviewed and updated in line with DfE guidance.