

COVID-19 school closure arrangements for safeguarding and child protection at:

Fitzharrys school



2020/21 Academic Year

Addendum 1 – effective from January 2021

School name	: Fitzharrys School
Policy owner	: Mr A Williams (DSL)
Date	: 18/01/2021
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Date shared with Head of School	: 19/01/2021
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Context

From 4th January 2021 parents were 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 - 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, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

This addendum to our safeguarding and child protection policy reflects the move to remote education for most pupils and is prepared in line with DFE guidance and Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2020)

[Restricting attendance during the national lockdown: schools \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/90222/Restricting-attendance-during-the-national-lockdown-schools.pdf)

[Keeping children safe in education \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/90222/Keeping-children-safe-in-education.pdf)

Our principles remain the same:

- the best interests of children must always continue to come first for those who remain in school and for the majority of students who are learning remotely at home.
- if anyone in a school or college has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act and act immediately
- a DSL or deputy should be available on-site, but if not available in person they will be contactable via phone or video.
- it is essential that unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children
- children should continue to be protected when they are online

All staff and volunteers will be made aware of this policy addendum and will be asked to confirm that they have read and understood the expectations contained within.

We must continue to maintain our culture of vigilance and ensure that any safeguarding concerns are shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads in a timely manner so that support may be implemented as appropriate to concerns raised. Any safeguarding concerns MUST continue to be logged via CPOMS and if the concern is of an urgent nature, please also ensure that you contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Deputies as you would if we were in school.

Safeguarding Key contacts

The below table details the main safeguarding contacts at Fitzharrys School and The Abingdon Learning Trust:

Role	Name	Phone	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mr A Williams	01235 520698	awilliams@fitzharrys.oxon.sch.uk

Deputy Designated safeguarding lead (DDSL)	Miss P Allen Miss H Cook Miss R David	01235 520698	pallen@fitzharrys.oxon.sch.uk Hcook2@fitzharrys.oxon.sch.uk rdavid@fitzharrys.oxon.sch.uk
Head of School if not DSL or DDSL	Mr W Speke	01235 520698	wspeke@fitzharrys.oxon.sch.uk
Chair of governors/ trustee	Caroline Bullock		Office.4127@fitzharrys.oxon.sch.uk
Safeguarding governor/ trustee	Mark Hindley		Office.4127@fitzharrys.oxon.sch.uk
ALT Director of Secondary Education	Mrs S Brinkley		sbrinkley@abingdonlearningtrust.org
ALT CEO	Dr Fiona Hammans		ceo@abingdonlearningtrust.org
ALT Safeguarding trustee	Lynn Fathers		Lfathers@abingdonlearningtrust.org

Identifying and responding to safeguarding concerns

It is important that staff and volunteers are aware that they may identify new safeguarding concerns about individual students during the lockdown period. All staff and volunteers must follow our safeguarding procedures, acting promptly without delay.

As per our established routines and expectations any safeguarding concerns during this period of lockdown/remote working must continue to be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mr A Williams as well as the Deputy Safeguarding Leads: Miss P Allen, Miss H Cook and Miss R David via CPOMS. All concerns must be acted upon immediately and logged without delay; especially if the student is in immediate danger or at risk of harm. Please ensure that any incidents are logged by 4pm at the latest on the day the concern is raised. In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS account from home they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads. If no acknowledgement is received contact must be made with main reception who will establish contact with the safeguarding team in order to confirm receipt of the concern and reassurance of follow up. The Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Deputies will be on site each day to support this process.

The DSL and Deputies will follow up each concern raised and identify the appropriate next step, this may include referring to LCSS, The MASH / social care, contacting parents, the SHN, CAMHS, The Abingdon Bridge, Thames Valley Police or other external agencies in addition to internal support from the pastoral team. Some students will have missed the routine and structure of school and may have struggled to engage with remote learning. It may be that we see an increase in demand for pastoral support from our student wellbeing managers across the lockdown period and when students return.

All staff who interact with children, including online learning must continue to look out for signs that a student may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care (LCSS no names consultation / The MASH) and as required, the police. Referrals will usually be made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads, however anyone can make a referral. If a referral is made the Designated Safeguarding Lead must be notified and the referral logged on CPOMS along with details of the return submission and supporting confirmation emails.

Reflecting on the previous lockdown it is important for staff and volunteers to recognise that they may identify new safeguarding concerns about individual students when they see them in person following the partial closure of the school. This may provide students with the first opportunity to make a disclosure and colleagues should be prepared for this, whenever it may be.

If a disclosure is made remember you must not offer opinions or ask leading questions. It is also important that an accurate record of the conversation is made and that this is passed to the DSL in a timely manner so that the concern may be escalated as appropriate and follow up support implemented. Remember T.E.D is a good strategy (Tell me, Explain, Describe) along with 'wh' questions – what, when and where to support the management and recording of a safeguarding disclosure.

Our safeguarding response will continue to be fluid in response to the advice we receive from the Government and local authority in particular with regard to 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.

[Planned Safeguarding Team Availability](#)

Throughout the period of lockdown and partial closure of the school, the DSL and deputies will continue to work with and liaise with external agencies and professionals. As required education checks will be provided to The MASH and South Assessment Team as well as Oxfordshire County Council, The Virtual School and other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads will be on site each day. Staff can identify who is on site via the weekly staffing rota on share point. The Designated Safeguarding Lead may be contacted via the Deputy DSLs or Senior Leadership Team colleagues if required.

[Safeguarding tracking and monitoring](#)

All safeguarding concerns must be logged via CPOMS inline with our safeguarding policy and the guidance above. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads will ensure relevant safeguarding and welfare information held on all children remains accurate. This will be held on CPOMS. Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) remains in force as does the Prevent Duty. The DSL (and Deputy DSLs) will need to have adequate time to support staff and children regarding new concerns (and referrals as appropriate) during the lockdown period and upon the return of students to school.

Supporting risk assessments

Fitzharrys School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students and will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Head of School will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

Fitzharrys School will continue to refer to the 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.

Supporting risk assessments are in place and link together safeguarding and health and safety, careful consideration has been given to these documents with a collaborative group having input in the creation and review process. The Risk Assessments have been reviewed and updated and are scheduled for formal approval by the Local Academy Board at an extraordinary meeting on 28th January 2021.

Students attending school

During the lockdown period those students who are identified as vulnerable will continue to attend school. Vulnerable children and young people include those 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.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself is not a determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies) know who our most vulnerable children are and will work alongside the pastoral team, SENco and Assistant Headteacher; Inclusion to allocate places. They have the flexibility to offer a place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

Fitzharrys 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; in Oxfordshire these are referred to as 'children we care for'. The lead person for this will be: William Browne (AHT Inclusion)

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at increased risk. In circumstances where a parent does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and Fitzharrys School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent. Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, Fitzharrys School or the social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England. As a school we will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

In addition to students who are identified as being vulnerable students whose parents work is critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and EU transition response are able to attend school if they are not able to remain at home. A supporting parental survey was completed at the start of lockdown to assess those students who required provision and have been included in our in school provision.

Attendance monitoring

Attendance monitoring and reporting procedures will continue to both the DFE and OCC during the lockdown period in line with current guidance. Those students who are absent due to the lockdown will be coded with an 'X'. Students who are on site will be marked in line with normal attendance requirements along with those vulnerable students who are absent. Shielding advice is currently in place in tier 4 areas, and so all children still deemed clinically extremely vulnerable are advised not to attend school. During the lockdown period parents are to maintain contact with the school with regard to medical appointments etc... which may affect attendance of remote lessons across the lockdown period; our attendance officer will continue to track and monitor this information.

Remote Learning & Online Safety

Fitzharrys School has a separate Remote Learning policy which outlines expectations and associated safeguarding measures for the delivery of live events or meetings via Microsoft Teams or Google Classroom (JMF6 lessons only). Remote education will include live sessions, recorded material and time for pupils to complete tasks and assignments independently. It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for safeguarding concerns and report any concerns in a timely manner to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies.

Alicia Corley (Deputy Headteacher) has responsibility for the quality and delivery of remote education. The remote education lead liaises with the Designated Safeguarding Lead as needed.

Form tutors, the pastoral team (HoY/SEMs) and the AHT Inclusion along with the Designated Safeguarding lead and Deputies will check if vulnerable children are able to access remote education, support them to access it (as far as possible) and to regularly check if they are doing so for example. The morning Fitz Focus sessions and recording of attendance during live lessons will support the monitoring of student engagement along with work submission.

Students support and monitoring

Students will continue to access work via their school Microsoft 365 account, with work set via epraise and supporting materials and resources for lessons located on 'share point' or the class team. The established routines for setting classwork work will be maintained and students should continue to email completed work/ targeted work to their teacher using their school email account or via the assignments feature within Teams. Tutors will make contact with tutees who don't attend morning registration and record supporting comments on the pastoral monitoring excel document. Supporting tracking and monitoring of work completion by subject teachers, Heads of Faculty, tutors, the pastoral and Senior Leadership Team will also be undertaken with follow up contact undertaken as appropriate in response to concerns. Form tutors will continue to be our identified first point of contact and will liaise with colleagues where concerns are identified.

The Assistant Headteacher; Inclusion will liaise with the guardians of the children we care for (our looked after children) and The Virtual School with regular contact maintained around work progress and engagement as well as the PEP process.

Safeguarding team updates

The DSL and Deputy DSLs will keep up to date with safeguarding issues and developments via updates from the Government, OCC and the education safeguarding advisory team as well as The OSCB and other safeguarding briefings. As appropriate key information will be shared with colleagues.

Safeguarding information updates

Regular communication to both parents and colleagues will help to ensure that safeguarding information remains up to date and that parents and colleagues are supported. Regular communications are received from the OSCB, Education Safeguarding Advisory Team and OCC via schools news. As appropriate information will be cascaded to appropriate people.

Mental Health

Negative and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of children and their parents. As students return colleagues from the pastoral and SEN teams along with our SHN will work to identify students who might need additional support and to put this support in place. It is important to understand that mental health issues can bring about changes in a child'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.

Peer on peer abuse

During the lockdown period our peer on peer abuse policy remains the same however, during the closure a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims. Where we receive a report of peer on peer abuse, we will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within our

safeguarding policy. As a school we will work with the young person, parents/carers and any multi agency partner required for example colleagues in the education safeguarding advisory team (ESAT) to ensure that our response ensures the safety and security of the young person concerned and that our follow up action is supportive to all parties. Any concerns and the associated follow up actions will be recorded on CPOMS and appropriate referrals made to the MASH/Thames Valley Police/ESAT.

Reporting concerns about staff or volunteers

During the partial closure any concerns about a staff member or volunteer who may pose a safeguarding risk to children must still be reported to the Head of School (or the chair of the local academy board if the concern is about the Head of School). The principles in part 4 of [KCSIE](#) will continue to support how we respond to any such concerns. Concerns around the Head of School must be directed to the Chair of Governors and CEO.

Staff and volunteers safeguarding training

In line with the updated guidance from The OSCB colleagues whose current three year certificate expires during this period will continue to maintain up to date generalist safeguarding training via the online training module available from The OSCB. Colleagues who this applies to will be advised of the need to complete the update training by the HR manager who maintains our training record alongside our SCR.

Guidance from the OSCB about safeguarding training can be found here:

<https://www.oscb.org.uk/learning-zone/training/>

Staffing and recruitment

During the period of partial closure there is no need to re-do DBS check for staff who are temporarily working at another school or college to support the response to coronavirus. Schools must satisfy themselves that someone in their setting has the required checks. This can be achieved by the receiving school seeking assurance from the current employer rather than requesting new checks.

There is also no need to obtain a new DBS check for returning staff who have continued to be employed but have not been working in regulated activity during partial school closures. If for any reason there are any concerns about an individual, a check may be obtained in the usual way. As a school we 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 (Paragraph 163 KCSIE), we will also consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) (Paragraph 166 of KCSIE).

As a school any new staff recruitment will continue to be undertaken with the principles and practice of safer recruitment. The checks outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education MUST be carried out before a new employee can start work in school. If a risk assessment is required to bridge the period between a check having been initiated but not yet completed, then this should only be in place and last for a week or so. If the new checks are not complete within two weeks of a new colleague starting, then Zoe Bratt (CFO) and Fiona

Hammans (CEO) must be contacted. No new employee should be paid if all checks have not been successfully completed (including at least 2 references being received)

All new staff will continue to receive safeguarding induction as part of our induction process. They will also be required to read our supporting safeguarding manual which contains part one and annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education, our Safeguarding Policy as well as supporting information about our safeguarding practice and other linked policies. The supporting reply slip also contains the annual staff declaration.

Behaviour Policy

Our behaviour Policy along with the supporting Addendum will continue to be implemented by staff to support students both in school and those who are learning remotely. If student misbehave during a live session follow up with home should be implemented as if they were in school making contact with parents and alerting the form tutor and pastoral team (HoY/SWM). For those in school the current Government and Public Health England advice will continue to be implemented re: Hands – Face – Space. Supporting signage and posters will be maintained to help ensure our expectations are clear. Overall students have responded exceptionally well to previous requests with the need for limited adjustments, and few anxieties/concerns about Covid-19.

Supporting Policies

It is important that staff continue to be aware of other associated policies, in particular the following:

- Fitzharrys School Safeguarding Policy
- Fitzharrys School Safeguarding Policy – COVID-19 Addendum 1
- Remote learning policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Staff code of conduct
- ICT policy

Safeguarding Policy and Addendum updates

As we continue to respond to the COVID-19 situation further updates will be made to our safeguarding policy in response to Government and local advice. Each time changes are made an Addendum will be created and colleagues will be asked to read and confirm their understanding of the changes. A record of these returns will be maintained and the updates will continue to be made available publicly.

All staff will be sent this addendum (2020/21 no.1) to our safeguarding policy to read. All staff will be asked to confirm they have read and understood this update and to confirm via email to Mrs C Mckivitt.