

# Grace Owen Nursery School

## Coronavirus Addendum to the School Safeguarding Policy

<b>Approved by:</b>	Lynne Truelove (Safeguarding Governor)	<b>Date:</b> September 2020
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<b>Last reviewed on:</b> 20.2.21
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<b>Next review due by:</b>	March 2021
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The following statement is a **temporary addition** to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy during the coronavirus pandemic.

As always, the welfare and safety of all our children is of paramount importance. Even at this unprecedented and disrupted time Grace Owen Nursery School will maintain its duty of care for all children on roll to the best of its ability, during the coronavirus outbreak.

This statement should be read alongside

- The existing school Safeguarding Policy
- Covid-19 Risk Assessment for School/Childcare Settings
- All Covid 19 school protocols
- Government guidance available at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/education-and-childcare>
- Safeguarding Sheffield Children Policies and procedures available at <https://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/sscb/education/policies-procedures>

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## Important Contacts

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)	Nancy Farrow	<a href="mailto:headteacher@graceowennurseryschool.org">headteacher@graceowennurseryschool.org</a>
Safeguarding Officer /Deputy DSL	Leonie Matthews	<a href="mailto:lead@graceowennurseryschool.org">lead@graceowennurseryschool.org</a>
Headteacher	Nancy Farrow	<a href="mailto:headteacher@graceowennurseryschool.org">headteacher@graceowennurseryschool.org</a>
Local authority designated officer (LADO)	Steven Hill	steven.hill@sheffield.gov.uk
Chair of governors	Lynne Truelove	0114 2722541

## Scope & Definitions

This addendum applies from the start of the autumn term 2020. It reflects updated advice from our 3 local safeguarding partners: **Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP)** which is jointly led by Sheffield City Council, South Yorkshire Police and the Sheffield Clinical Commissioning Group and Sheffield local authority (LA).

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of coronavirus, and should be read in conjunction with that policy. Unless covered here, our normal child protection policy continues to apply.

This addendum is subject to change, in response to any new or updated guidance the government may publish. We will keep it under review as set out in section 15 below.

In this addendum, where we refer to measures to protect pupils who are at home, this means those who are learning at home for reasons to do with coronavirus – for example, due to clinical and/or public health advice, such as if there's a local lockdown or if they need to self-isolate.

In this addendum, where we refer to vulnerable children, this means those who: are assessed as being in need, including children:

- With a child protection plan
- With a child in need plan
- Looked after by the local authority
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- Have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or LAs, for example those who are:
  - On the edge of receiving support from children's social care services
  - Adopted
  - At risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
  - Living in temporary accommodation
  - Young carers
  - Considered vulnerable by the school and/or LA

## 2. Core safeguarding principles

We will follow the statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

We will always have regard for these important safeguarding principles:

- The best interests of children must come first
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child, **they should 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 and volunteers must continue to act on any concerns they have about a child immediately. It is still vitally important to do this, both for children at school and those at home.

As a reminder, all staff should continue to work with and support children's social workers, where they have one, to help protect vulnerable children.

#### **Parents, Carers and External Agencies**

Any parent, carer or external agency with a concern for a child attending Grace Owen is encouraged to contact Nancy Farrow or Leonie Matthews as soon as possible via one of the methods detailed above.

**NB: confidential information or details regarding a concern should not be included in emails to the above address. It should be used to request return contact only**

**If at any time you have a concern regarding a child you can contact:**

**Sheffield Safeguarding Hub on 0114 273 4855**

**or the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000.**

### 4. DSL (and deputy) arrangements

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

If our DSL (or deputy) can't be on site, they can be contacted remotely by email.

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding.

The senior leader will be responsible for liaising with our 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 they need access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments

#### **The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Lead**

Nancy Farrow and Leonie Matthews

- Telephone 0114 2722541 (School office)
- Email: (see contact details above)
- In person in school (socially distanced)
  
- Staff with a concern about a child or family must contact Nancy or Leonie immediately

## 5. Working with other agencies

We will continue to work with children's social care, with virtual school heads for looked-after and previously looked-after children, and with any other relevant safeguarding and welfare partners, to help keep children safe.

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

## 6. Monitoring attendance

We will resume taking our attendance register. We will also follow [guidance](#) from the Department for Education on how to record attendance and what data to submit with regard to children under 5 years old.

Where any child we expect to attend school doesn't attend, or stops attending, we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parents or carers, by telephone call.
- Notify their social worker, where they have one

We will make arrangements with parents and carers to make sure we have up-to-date emergency contact details, and additional contact details where possible. Parents email in updates.

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

## 8. Concerns about a staff member, supply teacher or volunteer

We will continue to follow the principles set out in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Staff should continue to act on any concerns they have immediately – whether those concerns are about staff/supply teachers/volunteers working on site or remotely.

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 for the duration of the COVID-19 period, in line with government guidance.

## 9. Contact plans

### **Children and Families with a Social Worker**

Throughout lockdown and during Covid-19 restrictions the parents/carers of children that have a Social Worker have been regularly contacted by DSL/DDSL. They are also in regular contact with Social Care and other agencies that are supporting our families. Meetings are conducted safely and securely over an online video conference eg. Zoom.

We have contact plans for children with a social worker, and other children who we have safeguarding concerns about, for circumstances where the child is at home.

Each child has an individual plan, which sets out

- How often the school will make contact – this will be at least once a week
- Which staff member(s) will make contact – as far as possible, this will be staff who know the family well

- How staff will make contact – this will be over the phone, doorstep visits, or a combination of both

We have agreed these plans with children's social care where relevant, and will review them at core group or TAF meetings.

If we can't make contact, we will contact children's social care or the police.

### **Keeping in touch with children and families**

We know that children and families are living together in a very different way because of the pandemic. We understand that it may be difficult to maintain a routine and stay motivated to learn. It is also hard when children cannot mix outside their class bubble and some cannot see their friends. It is also hard when parents do not have as much direct contact with teachers.

Grace Owen Nursery School will implement regular contact with children and families via telephone in order to keep school and home connected.

**The DSL and Deputy DSL** will manage regular check-ins with children considered vulnerable. Vulnerable children are those who are looked after by the local authority, have a social worker, have a MAST worker or an EHC plan. Children and families that have had any of the above within the last 12 months will be supported if assessed as necessary.

**Lead staff** may be asked to telephone children and families more regularly to maintain good home/school communication. The purpose for this contact will be to discuss any issues linked to pupil's wellbeing that may arise within a class bubble.

Parents may also be contacted by Nancy (SENDSCO) supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities

## **10. Safeguarding all children**

Staff and volunteers are aware that this difficult time potentially puts all children at greater risk.

Staff and volunteers 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

### **10.1 Children returning to school**

The DSL or deputy will do all they reasonably can to find out from parents and carers whether there have been any changes regarding welfare, health and wellbeing that they should be aware of before children return.

The DSL and deputy will be given time to support staff and children regarding new concerns (and referrals as appropriate) as children return to school.

Staff and volunteers will be alert to any new safeguarding concerns as they see pupils in person.

### **10.2 Children at home**

The school will maintain contact with children who are at home. Staff will try to speak directly to children at home to help identify any concerns. They will use school phones and devices to make calls home. Staff and volunteers will look out for signs like:

- No contact from children or families

## **11. Online safety**

### **11.1 In school**

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

## 11.2 Outside school

Where staff are interacting with families online, they will continue to follow our existing code of conduct.

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 .

## 11.3 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 where else they can go for support to keep their children safe online (contact the DSL or DSD)

## 12. Mental health

### 12.1 Children returning to school

Staff and volunteers will be aware of the possible effects that this period may have had on pupils' mental health. They will look out for behavioural signs, including pupils being fearful, withdrawn, aggressive, oppositional or excessively clingy, to help identify where support may be needed.

### Keeping in touch with children and families

As above

### 12.2 Children at home

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils.

We will also signpost parents/carers and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time.

Staff and volunteers will be alert to mental health concerns in children who are at home, and act on these immediately, following our reporting procedures as set out in section 3 of this addendum

## 13. Staff and volunteer recruitment

We continue to recognise the importance of robust safer recruitment procedures, so that staff and volunteers 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.

When carrying out DBS checks and right to work checks, we will follow the latest guidance from the DBS, Home Office and Immigration Enforcement as appropriate (for example, with regards to the process for verifying documents). We will inform candidates about the intended process as soon as reasonably practicable.

We are not currently accepting volunteers but will continue to do our usual checks on new volunteers as and when we do, and do risk assessments to decide whether volunteers who aren't in regulated activity should have an enhanced DBS check, in accordance with paragraphs 183-188 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

## 14. Safeguarding induction and training

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

New staff and volunteers will continue to receive a safeguarding induction in line with the expectations of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

## Induction

Any staff appointed to the school will receive a safeguarding induction. All staff sign to say they have read and received. This is delivered face-to-face (socially distanced) by the Safeguarding Officer using an induction pack.

## Training

The DSL regularly shares safeguarding updates with all staff and this will continue using the following methods

- Email
- Face-to-face meeting/ briefing
- Staff notice board
- Zoom

The DSL continue to offer an 'open door policy' (Though the current situation deems that staff must knock before entering) and welcomes any questions relating to safeguarding or child protection at any time.

## Staff meetings

Some meetings will take place virtually. Some meetings will be in room team bubbles adhering to social distancing guidelines and hygiene measures.

School have decided that **Zoom** will be permitted for use to enable socially distanced meetings to take place.

### **Zoom must not be used to communicate with children.**

When using Zoom the following must be adhered to

- The waiting room must be enabled - invitees are only allowed to join the meeting by the host.
- Meeting invites must be sent to work emails only.
- Meeting IDs must not be shared publically.
- All parties should use their real name, this can be first name only or full name.
- All parties must be aware of where they are (home, school, shared space) while participating and ensure meetings remain confidential.
- All parties will follow basic ground rules to enable meetings to run smoothly, such as,
  - Mute microphone if not needed.
  - Raise hand or use tools to indicate desire to speak.

## 16. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- > Safeguarding policy
- > Staff code of conduct
- > Health and safety policy
- > Online safety policy
- > Cyber-Bullying and Anti-Bullying Policies
- > Whistle Blowing Policy

## 15. Monitoring arrangements

This statement will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis throughout the pandemic.

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the 3 local safeguarding partners, the LA or Department for Education is updated, and as a minimum on the first day of every month by Nancy Farrow (HT/DSL). At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.