

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

Magdalen College School

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Context

From 20th March 2020 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 and for children who are vulnerable. This addendum to Magdalen College School's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children include those who have a social worker and those children and young people up to the age of 25 with education, health and care (EHC) plans. Those who have a social worker include children who have a Child Protection Plan and those who are looked after by the Local Authority. A child may also be deemed to be vulnerable if they have been assessed 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 Local Authority and parents, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a school place in order to meet their needs, or whether they can safely have their needs met at home. This could include, if necessary, 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.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the deputies together with the SENDCO know who our most vulnerable children are. They have the flexibility to offer a school place to those on the edge of receiving children's social care support.

Magdalen College 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. The lead person for this will be the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

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

Attendance monitoring

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance. The DfE has introduced a [daily online attendance form](#) to keep a record of children of key workers and vulnerable children who are attending school. This allows for a record of attendance for safeguarding purposes and allows schools to provide accurate, up-to-date data to the department on the number of children taking up places.

Magdalen College School and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – staff will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not.

Staff will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend. To support this, staff will, when communicating with parents and carers, confirm that emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for any additional emergency contact numbers where they are available.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at school, or discontinues, Magdalen College School will notify their social worker.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site.

Where this is not the case a trained 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 logging a concern on My Concern, 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 school.

It is important that all staff have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day staff on site will be able to contact the DSL or deputies as follows:

Name	Number
Hilary Tudor-Price (Work)	07545 601692
Deanna Davies (Work)	07734 572025
Claire Cox (Work)	07595 710822
Amanda Jones (Work)	07739 772650

Staff should continue to enter any safeguarding on My Concern as soon as possible after the issue is raised.

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

Reporting a concern

Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the Safeguarding Policy, this includes making a report via My Concern, which can be done remotely. In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access My Concern from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead and one deputy DSL. 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 Headteacher. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Headteacher whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the Headteacher. Concerns around the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors.

Supporting children not in school

Magdalen College School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils. Where the DSL has identified a pupil to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person.

Details of this plan must be recorded and shared with the DSL, a record of contact made should be recorded on My Concern.

The communication plans can include; remote contact, phone contact, and in an emergency door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded.

Magdalen College School and the safeguarding team will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan. This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the team will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages. Magdalen College School recognises that school is a protective factor for pupils, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Teachers at Magdalen College School need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Supporting children in school

Magdalen College School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its' pupils. Magdalen College School will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish.

The Headteacher will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety. Magdalen College School will refer to the Government guidance for education 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 in addition to the Safety Procedures for working with pupils in School.

Magdalen College School will ensure that where we care for children of key workers and vulnerable children on site, we ensure appropriate support is in place for them. If appropriate, this will be bespoke to each child and recorded on My Concern as necessary.

If there are concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead, deputies or first aiders the situation will be discussed immediately with the Senior Leadership Team.

Online safety in school

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

Children and online safety away from school

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 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 and as required, the police.

Staff at Magdalen College should not be delivering virtual lessons via video conferencing or similar. Staff will upload documents and resources onto the school platforms for pupils to access remotely.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Magdalen College 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 the school's Safeguarding and 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 on My Concern and appropriate referrals made.

Mental health

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

Children of key workers and vulnerable children on site at Magdalen College School, will have appropriate support through the pastoral support system. Staff should be aware of 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, and that can be an indication of an underlying problem. Support for pupils and students in the current circumstances will include existing provision in school as well as access to telephone support or online support through Zumos.

Children moving school

If a pupil leaves Magdalen College School, during this period, the school will do whatever is reasonable to provide the receiving institution with any relevant welfare and child protection information. This will be especially important where children are vulnerable.

For looked-after children, any change in school should be led and managed by the VSH with responsibility for the child. As the receiving institution, Magdalen College School will be made aware of the reason the child is vulnerable and any arrangements in place to support them. Magdalen College School will as a minimum, will 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 VSH is). Magdalen College School would plan for this to 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 the SENDCO /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 senior leaders should take responsibility.

Whilst schools and colleges must continue to have appropriate regard to data protection and GDPR they do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Further advice about information sharing can be found at paragraphs 76-83 of KCSIE.

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, Magdalen College School will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes, 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 Magdalen College 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. Magdalen College 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.

Magdalen College 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, Magdalen College School will continue to keep the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in KCSIE.

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 miss their refresher training. All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019).

The DSL should communicate with staff any new local arrangements, so they know what to do if they are worried about a child.

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

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our school, we will take into account the DfE supplementary guidance on safeguarding children during the COVID-19 pandemic and will accept portability as long as the current employer confirms in writing that:-

- the individual has been subject to an enhanced DBS and children's barred list check
- there are no known concerns about the individual's suitability to work with children
- there is no ongoing disciplinary investigation relating to that individual

Upon arrival, they will be given a copy of Magdalen College School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.