



**THE DOWNS**  
PREPARATORY SCHOOL  
BRISTOL

## **Annex to 5.1 Child Protection Policy COVID-19 school closure arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection**

In response to the Covid 19 Pandemic and in-line with the DfE Safeguarding Guidance the following annex to the child protection policy covers essential changes to safeguarding arrangements.

This annex sets out some of the adjustments the Downs Preparatory School is making in line with the changed arrangements in the school and following advice from government and local agencies.

The school will strictly follow the government guidance. Remote learning will be available for all pupils in the event of school closure.

The school's Safeguarding Policy remains the same and the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults always comes first. Staff should respond robustly to safeguarding concerns and referrals should continue to be made in line with our established safeguarding procedure.

The pressures on children, young people and their families at this time are significant. There will be heightened awareness of family pressures for a variety of reasons including, having to stay within the household, through financial hardship or health anxiety. These areas will be considered in terms of setting any work for students to undertake at home (including recognising the impact of online learning and ability to access on line resources). Staff will be aware of the mental health of both students and their parents, and should refer to the DSL about any emerging concerns. The school has adopted a "no pressure" approach to remote learning to ensure family discord is avoided.

## **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 (EHCP) 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 a **Child 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 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, 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.

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

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 school safeguarding leads will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

Where parents are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, the school safeguarding leads or the child's social worker will talk through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

The Downs Preparatory School will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend a school, including remotely if needed.

## **For students with an EHCP**

Support Workers and Learning Support Advisors will maintain regular contact as agreed with student and parent. Support can be delivered through individual arrangements based on curriculum activity.

## **DSL**

Our school, wherever possible will have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not possible, 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, the Headmaster will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

The DSL will advise on matters regarding the updating and managing child protection documents, updating records and liaising as required with children's social workers as required.

The DSL will continue to attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

## Reporting arrangements:

Designated Safeguarding Lead

**Tom Westray**

01275 852 008 (Ext: 1118)

[twestray@thedowns.avon.sch.uk](mailto:twestray@thedowns.avon.sch.uk)

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

**Imogen Payne**

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Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for EYFS Bertie's Nursery

**Hattie**

01275 217510

**Xanthinia**

01275 217510

Nominated Safeguarding Governor for The Downs Preparatory School

**Rebecca Tear**

(0117) 905 5200

[rtear@badmintonschool.co.uk](mailto:rtear@badmintonschool.co.uk)

Nominated Safeguarding Governor for EYFS Bertie's Nursery

**Dr Richard Thomson**

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Nominated E-safety Governor

**Mrs Helen Archer**

07866792340

[belarcher@hotmail.com](mailto:belarcher@hotmail.com)

We have confirmed the arrangements to contact the LADO at the local authority remain unchanged.

- Staff will continue to follow the safeguarding procedures and advise the safeguarding leads immediately about concerns they have about any child, whether in school or not. COVID-19 means a need for increased vigilance due to the pressures on services, families and young people.
- Staff have been reminded to be extra diligent for signs of abuse or vulnerability in children despite limited visual contact. If staff have any concerns they must report to the DSL.

Normal safeguarding procedures apply for referrals to children's services. This contact will go through a member of the safeguarding team (listed above) who will follow appropriate measures in seeking the appropriate and necessary support.

### **Allegations or concerns about staff**

With such different arrangements in place, young people could be at greater risk of on line abuse. As is always our practice, we remind all staff to maintain the view that 'it could happen here' and to immediately report any concern, no matter how small, to the safeguarding team.

### **Attendance monitoring**

Local authorities and education settings will continue to record and monitor attendance in the usual way.

### **New staff or volunteers**

The Downs Preparatory School have no new staff or volunteers starting during the period of remote learning.

### **Peer on peer abuse**

We recognise the potential for abuse to go on between young people, especially in the context of a school closure or partial closure. Our staff will remain vigilant to the signs of peer-on-peer abuse,

### **Supporting children in school**

We are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all our students.

Our school will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The Headmaster will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

We will 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.

If school closes, we 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.

If the SLT has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – this will be discussed immediately.

### **Risk online**

Staff will be aware of the signs and signals of cyberbullying and other risks online and apply the same child-centred safeguarding practices as when students are

learning at the school. For key worker children in school we continue to ensure appropriate filters and monitors are in place.

Staff will continue to teach and conduct themselves to the highest professional standards during this exceptional period and protocols for on line working have been issued in line with North Somerset Guidance as per below:

*No virtual 1:1 tutoring of students without consent from parents. (Parent opt out had nil return)*

*Online learning should be in a room where parents can supervise a child's activity*

*Teachers should be aware of what can be seen/ heard in the background of any broadcast*

*Normal staff clothing and conduct to apply and children should also be in appropriate clothing*

*Research the software you plan to use and consider how you can ensure this is safe for students, know what advice you need to prepare for students/ parents to help set up accounts safely*

Staff and pupils are to refer to the e-safety policy and acceptable use agreements (signed by pupils) when conducting remote learning and adhere to at all times. Children working in school have signed a new and updated version of the acceptable use policy.

## **Mental Health**

Restrictions to movement and contact with other people means pupils are more likely to be at risk of mental health problems. The Department for Education have produced guidance to support parents:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

The school Pastoral Care program will still be active and the team will meet weekly. Children will have access to their form teacher through form periods twice daily as well as regular group meetings with the school counsellor. The Pastoral care group will also conduct fortnightly wellness surveys to assess the pupils well being throughout lockdown. The results of this will inform initiatives such as more social time assigned.

The following organisations can also provide support:

[www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com) – *Free online emotional wellbeing and counselling with self-help articles*

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helping-someone-else/>

## **Useful Links for Families**

### **Get Safe Online**

Info on a little bit of everything including personal use and business

<https://www.getsafeonline.org/>

### **Common sense media**

Reviews apps, games, books and films to help parents understand the positive and negative aspects and appropriateness for their child

<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/>

### **Safety Centre**

App, website and game guides on setting up security, privacy and how to report and block

<https://oursafetycentre.co.uk/>

### **NSPCC**

Articles and advice on a variety of topics to address with children

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

### **O2 helpline**

In conjunction with the NSPCC, a helpline for any of your online safety questions or concerns

0808 800 5000

[help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

### **Internet Matters**

Good advice by age guides

<https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/>

Help to set up parental controls

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/>

### **Zipit**

App in conjunction with Childline to help young people decline requests for nudes and inappropriate content

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/sexting/zipit-app/>

### **Yoti**

Another app supported by Childline to assist young people in removing nudes from the internet

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/sexting/report-nude-image-online/>

### **Remove Harmful Content**

Help to remove upsetting content from the internet (this can include things that aren't illegal such as impersonation accounts and self-harm images)

<https://reportharmfulcontent.com/>

### **Childline**

Advice on a variety of online safety issues

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/>

### **BBC Own It**

A collection of videos on a variety of topics including the online world. Videos hosted by celebrities and other young people. Can also be used for wider PSHE topics.

<https://www.bbc.com/ownit>

### **Professionals Online Safety Helpline (POSH)**

Support for the children's workforce, including foster carers around online safety matters

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/helpline/professionals-online-safety-helpline>

### **Behaviour Policy**

An addendum was added to the serious misbehaviour list on the Behaviour Policy to include spitting or coughing deliberately at another pupil. This is now considered an expellable offence.

T Westray  
Designated Safeguard lead