

Keeping children safe during emergency closures

During the Covid crisis, the school developed safeguarding approaches designed to keep children safe when they weren't able to attend school because of the emergency closures.

The following processes have been retained should any emergency result in the school being closed for any extended period.

Definition of 'vulnerable' during an emergency closure:

1. Any child who is in receipt of an EHCP or are Looked After by the Local Authority.
2. Any child who is currently known to Social Care, or have been historically and may still be at risk.
3. Children who are on the school's Vulnerable Families list.

Important Safeguarding Principles:

- With regard to safeguarding, the best interests of children must always continue to come first.
- If anyone has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act and act immediately.
- A Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputy will be available each day, irrespective of any emergency closure.
- 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.

Contacting the Designated Safeguarding Lead:

The DSLs can be contacted at school during working hours via either email or phone. If you are concerned about the welfare of a child out of hours, either call the DSL's on their personal mobiles and/ or ring the Access and Response Team. Contact details are as follows:

Name	Role	Email
Neil Fry	Blackhorse Designated Safeguarding Lead	Neil.fry@blackhorsepri.org.uk
Soraya Young	Emersons Green Designated Safeguarding Lead	Soraya.young
Emma Touzalin	Family Link worker for both schools in the event of an emergency closure.	Emma.Touzalin@blackhorsepri.org.uk
Sara Alhadeff (School Counsellor)	School Counsellor for both schools in the event of an emergency closure.	Sara.alhadeff@blackhorsepri.org.uk

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Access & Response Team (Social Services)	https://www.southglos.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/care-and-support-children-families/access-response-team-art/	01454 866000
Local Authority Designated Officer (to report concerns about school staff).	http://sites.southglos.gov.uk/safeguarding/children/i-am-a-professional/managing-allegations/	01454 868508

Keeping children safe who are attending school during an emergency closure:

Safeguarding procedures for children attending school are the same as outlined in the Child Protection Policy. A Designated Safeguarding Officer will be onsite at all times should a safeguarding concern need to be reported. Staff should report these directly and also record the concern on CPOMs.

Keeping children safe who are working at home.

The greatest challenge posed by any emergency closure is that of keeping the school community safe during the period of the closure. All children may be at greater risk of physical, emotional or psychological harm as a result of abuse or neglect; and families are likely to be hard pressed as a result of isolation, overcrowded housing, adult mental health issues, bereavement and/or financial insecurity. Children who live in families with existing vulnerability or safeguarding concerns are at significant risk during this period.

In order to combat this risk the school will ensure that:

1. Vulnerable families will be offered places at the school's emergency childcare.
2. Parents/ carers are provided with the email addresses of their child's class teachers and the pastoral support team so parents can proactively seek support.
3. The Teacher will see all children every day, as a group, as part of the live teaching sessions. Children who are more vulnerable will also be contacted 2-3 times a week by a member of staff to check on their learning and well-being.
4. The School Counsellor and Family Link Officer will provide direct support to children and their families should there be concerns regarding mental health (child or parent).
5. Regular articles are published in the weekly newsletter focusing on well-being and e-safety and the school will provide webinars for children, staff and parents on e-safety issues.
6. Safeguarding information is up-to-date on the school website and signposts children and parents to places where they can access support if they feel unsafe.
7. Teachers email all families weekly to keep in touch/
8. Communications with parents are logged on CPOMs using the 'Covid-19 Contact' category.
9. Should the class teacher notice that children have stopped attending live lessons, and if they are unable to make contact with parents themselves within 48 hours, then the DSL will contact the parents to re-engage them in home learning. If the DSL can't contact the parent via phone then they will go to the parents' home in order to establish contact.

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10. Most children with EHCPs will have a school place. However, for those that don't choose to accept this daily contact will be made with their 1-to-1 TA who will continue to ensure that the EHCP is being met.
11. Staff can refer families to Sara Alhadeff, School Counsellor, via CPOMs for concerns about child mental health or family bereavement. The School Counsellor will offer video conferencing appointments to children where appropriate. These will be recorded on CPOMs.
12. The School Family Link (Emma Touzalin) will email and phone vulnerable families weekly. Staff can refer families to Emma via CPOMs for concerns about parenting, housing, finance or parental mental illness.
13. The DSL will provide the LA with a list of vulnerable families so that monitoring arrangements can be made.

Keeping children safe who have a social worker:

Children who are working with a social worker will automatically be given a place in school and strongly encouraged to attend.

Should a vulnerable child with a social worker not attend school then the social worker will be notified.

Children with a social worker who are not attending school will be contacted by a member of staff every day. Any safeguarding concerns will be immediately discussed with the social worker.

Reporting Safeguarding Concerns for children working from home:

If a member of staff has safeguarding concerns about a child through contact with parents as outlined above they should:

1. Email the DSL with the concern. Urgent concerns should be phoned through to the DSL and/or Social Care immediately.
2. Record the concern on CPOMS. The DSL will record actions against these in the usual manner.

Contacting parents by phone:

Staff will continue to contact parents by phone to provide support. Where this is the case, staff should always:

1. Hide their mobile number from the caller so that parents don't have personal mobile numbers.
2. Log the conversation on CPOMS using 'Covid-19 Closure Contact' category.
3. Be careful not to give parents personal information.

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Keeping children safe online during the closure:

Children are likely to be spending more time online during the closure both for work and leisure. It is likely that this may be unsupervised at times as parents will themselves be required to work from home.

The school will work to keep children safe online by:

1. Publishing regular E-safety articles in the weekly newsletter, including how to operate parent restrictions on tablets, computers, phones and games consoles.
2. The school will provide online workshops for older children and parents on how to stay safe online.
3. Ensuring that the only contact between parents and staff is via school email addresses.
4. Ensuring that there is no contact with families via social media (other than the school Twitter account, which is public).
5. Provide clear guidance to staff and parents as to how video conferencing will be safely used for live teaching via the school's [Video Conferencing Protocol](#).

Concerns about staff during the closure:

Whilst the closure will require more direct personal contact with parents, staff should maintain the same professionalism that would be expected during normal schooling.

If you are concerned about the conduct of a member of staff which you believe to be unprofessional or unsafe, this must be reported to the DSL.

If your concern relates to the DSL, or you are unhappy with the DSL's response, then your concern should be reported directly to the LADO.