

Safeguarding during COVID-19

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1: My DSL training has expired, am I still OK to carry out the role during school closures?

A1: Yes, the Department for Education has advised that the DSL role can still be carried out even where training has not been updated within the 2 years as required in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019.

Q2: We have a number of vulnerable pupils who, although they don't have an allocated social worker, would benefit from being offered a school place during the closures. Can we do this?

A2: Yes, the government have allowed schools the flexibility to offer places in such circumstances.

Q3: Does our Designated Safeguarding Lead have to be on site during the school closures?

A3: No the Department for Education guidance recognises that this may not be possible at present. However, there must be a DSL or deputy who is available to be contacted via phone or video link, during school hours.

Q4: Do we need to adapt our Safeguarding or Child Protection policies because of the COVID-19 outbreak?

A4: Yes, nurseries, schools and colleges are required to include an addendum or annex to ensure that new arrangements in response to COVID-19 are accurately reflected. This should be kept under review as circumstances continue to evolve.

Q5: We have children who despite having an allocated social worker, are still not being brought into school. Is this something that we can enforce?

A5: No, although it is a requirement that children in such circumstances are brought to school, it is not enforceable. Local Authorities hold responsibility for these children and should support these children to access this provision. Where schools have concerns about the welfare of these children, communication should be made with the social worker.

Q6: I have heard that the DBS are changing their systems in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, does this mean Safer Recruitment processes have changed?

A6: No, the Disclosure and Barring Service have made slight changes to minimise face to face contact and their new updated guidance should be followed. All other Safer Recruitment processes should be followed as usual; these are outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019. Any new staff or volunteers in schools should receive an induction and should be required to read the setting's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy (including updates) and Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Q7: Our pupils who have been offered a school place are meeting at another site within our academy trust, who holds responsibility for the safeguarding of these pupils whilst on another site?

A7: Safeguarding remains EVERYONE'S responsibility. The school or college which is acting as the hub should "continue to provide a safe environment, keep children safe and ensure staff and volunteers have been appropriately checked and risk assessments carried out as required." They must also be able to contact a DSL if required.

Q8: Do we need to record attendance of children who have been offered a place during school closures?

A8: Yes, the Department for Education has introduced an online attendance form ([Government publications coronavirus form](#)) so that the attendance of children of key workers and vulnerable children can be recorded. Although usual non-attendance procedures do not need to be followed during this time, if a child does not attend where school are expecting them to, a reason should be obtained.