



COVID-19 school lockdown arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Pitcheroak School

Safeguarding Governor: Terry Miller
Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Trish Baker
Deputy Safeguarding Lead/s: Ms Sheila Holden
Mrs Holly Townsend

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1. Context

Due to an increase in the rates and means of transmission of coronavirus further measures are necessary to reduce transmission. On 4th January 2021 the Prime Minister announced a national lockdown in England to begin on 5th January 2021. Following this [announcement](#), only children of critical workers and vulnerable children and young people should attend school or college. All other pupils and students will receive remote education. **See the list below of those vulnerable children who can attend school.** Follow this link for a list of work that is considered critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and EU transition response:

[Children of critical workers and vulnerable children who can access schools or educational settings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Pitcheroak School will continue to follow DfE COVID guidance (DfE COVID Safeguarding guidance)

Contact details for reporting to Public Health

For COVID-19 queries related to education settings including early years and childcare settings, schools or Post 16 provision:

Worcestershire County Council Public Health Team
Email: WCHealthprotection@worcestershire.gov.uk
Tel: 01905 845491

For notification of suspected cases:

On-line notification:

<https://capublic.worcestershire.gov.uk/TestAndTracePublic/SchoolEducation>

For notification of confirmed cases:

Worcestershire County Council Local Outbreak Response Team (LORT)
Monday-Sunday 0900-1800

Email: WCHealthprotection@worcestershire.gov.uk Please add to the subject line "[school name] - positive case confirmed"

Tel: 01905 845491

You can find all our procedures and guidance on the management of suspected cases, management of confirmed cases and arrangements for management of a possible outbreak on our website: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Public Health guidance for settings](#)

This addendum of the Pitcheroak School Safeguarding, and Child Protection policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

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Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Trish Baker		pbaker@pitcheroak.worcs.sch.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	Sheila Holden Holly Townsend		head@pitcheroak.worcs.sch.uk htownsend@pitcheroak.worcs.sch.uk
Headteacher	Sheila Holden		head@pitcheroak.worcs.sch.uk
Safeguarding Governor	Terry Miller		Via office@pitcheroak.worcs.sch.uk

School office: office@pitcheroak.worcs.sch.uk

Vulnerable children

Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:
 - children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services
 - adopted children or children on a special guardianship order
 - those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
 - those living in temporary accommodation
 - those who are young carers
 - **those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)**
 - **care leavers**
 - **others at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health**

Senior leaders, especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies) know who our most vulnerable children are. An individual risk assessment has been completed for each pupil **in the school** and a RAG (red, amber, green) rating identified. Risk assessments will be updated and RAG ratings revised in response to information received.

Pitcheroak 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: Holly Townsend.

In circumstances where the parent of a vulnerable child does not want to bring their child to an education setting, the social worker and school will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent and discuss their concerns using supporting guidance considering the child's circumstances and their best interests. Where a leave of absence is granted to a vulnerable child or young person, school will still speak to parents and carers, and social workers (where applicable) to explore the reasons for this and any concerns raised. The discussions will focus on the welfare of the child or young person and ensuring that the child or young person is able to access appropriate education and support while they are at home.

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

Pitcheroak School will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend school.

Where on-site provision has had to stop temporarily on public health advice, school will contact the local authority to discuss alternative arrangements for vulnerable children and young people and work towards welcoming back pupils as soon as possible, where feasible to do so.

Attendance monitoring

No one with symptoms should attend school for any reason.

Eligible children and young people are strongly encouraged to attend their school, unless they are self-isolating, or they are clinically vulnerable (in which case they should follow medical advice). If someone in their household is extremely clinically vulnerable, they should continue to attend school.

School will continue to record attendance in the register. The completion of the online Educational Setting Status form which gives the Department for Education daily updates on how many children and staff are attending, has been paused pending an update but will resume when instructed to begin completing it again.

School will follow up on absences of the pupils who are expected to be in school. In the situation where a parent wishes for their child to be absent, school will authorise the absence during this national lockdown period.

Disapplication of section 444(1) and (1A) of the Education Act 1996 has been granted. Section 444(1) and (1A) of the Act create offences relating to the failure of parents to secure regular attendance at school of a registered pupil. Absence will not therefore be penalised.

If the parent of a vulnerable child wishes their child to be absent, the parent is expected to let the school know.

The Department for Education expects schools to grant applications for leave of absence given the exceptional circumstances.

It remains a parent's duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age receives a suitable education in whatever way they can under section 7 of the Act and state-funded schools are required to provide remote education to pupils who are not attending in certain circumstances by virtue of the Coronavirus Act 2020 Provision of Remote Education (England)

Pitcheroak School will inform allocated social workers, if a child is not able to attend school due to COVID.

To support the above, Pitcheroak School will, when communicating with parents/carers, confirm 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, we will notify their social worker.

Pitcheroak School will continue to follow the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education.

It is expected that schools will have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. However, it is recognised that for some schools there may be operational challenges to this. In such cases, there are two options to consider:

- a trained DSL (or deputy) from the school can be available to be contacted via phone or online video, for example working from home
- sharing trained DSLs (or deputies) with other schools (who should be available to be contacted via phone or online video)

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to one of the above options, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

This will include updating and managing access to child protection online management system, CPOMS and 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 the school or college.

It is important that all school staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). In the event that pupils are in school, on each day, staff on site will be made aware of who that person is and how to speak to them.

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 school Safeguarding Policy, this includes making a report via CPOMS, which can be done remotely.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff cannot access their CPOMS from home, they should email the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher. 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: Mr Steven Turner.

All concerns must be reported to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) who will continue to offer support in the process of managing allegations.

Safeguarding Training and induction

Designated Safeguarding Leads (or deputy) will be able to access DSL training either virtually or face to face and all DSLs will need to have their DSL certificates up to date.

All existing school staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020). 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, or new volunteers enter school, 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 the receiving setting's child protection policy, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

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, Pitcheroak School will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) (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 Pitcheroak 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.

Pitcheroak 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.

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

Online safety in schools and colleges

Pitcheroak School will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. This includes the use of an online filtering system.

Where students are using computers in school, appropriate supervision will be in place.

Children and online safety away from school and college

Schools have a legal duty to provide remote education for state-funded, school-age children unable to attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

Where a class, group or small number of pupils need to self-isolate, or there are local restrictions requiring pupils to remain at home, the Department for Education expects schools to be able to immediately offer them access to remote education. Schools should ensure remote education, where needed, is safe.

It is important that all staff when in contact with parents/carers and children, including online, continue to be alert for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the Safeguarding Children Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

Online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the school's code of conduct.

Pitcheroak School will ensure any use of online learning tools and systems is in line with privacy and data protection/GDPR requirements.

All staff at Pitcheroak School have access to Microsoft Teams as the agreed platform for delivering all online teaching. This is a secure platform that allows the host (staff member) to record the entire meeting and is automatically saved. (All saved recordings can be accessed by the IT Manager as required, for monitoring.) Pupils cannot initiate a 1:1 chat or video call and can only message within the live lesson which can therefore be moderated by the staff members present.

An E-Lesson Agreement has been devised, the link to which is:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=1GyOKdD7YkmhM61PkiZqpA-TLiSIVSVBqJUzwHW07QBUNDcwSjM3U09ERjM0S1ITMFEzV0NEU0hKMi4u>

This online form is circulated to the parent/carer of any pupil who will be invited to join a Teams meeting and must be completed and submitted prior to being involved in any meeting.

Below are some points included in the E-Learning Agreement that must be considered and followed by **all staff** at all times when delivering virtual lessons and online meetings especially where webcams are involved:

- No 1:1s – a minimum of 2 staff members must be present.
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and where nothing personal or inappropriate can be seen in the background.
- The live class should be recorded so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed.
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time, or the streaming may prevent the family 'getting on' with their day (the agreed length of time for lessons has been set at 45 minutes).
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background.
- Staff must only use the agreed platform provided by Pitcheroak School (Microsoft Teams) to communicate with pupils or colleagues. Staff may also use the 3CX Telephone system from their school laptop to make telephone calls to parents and carers.
- Staff should record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

Supporting children not in school

Pitcheroak School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its Children and Young people.

Where individuals remain at home, school has a system in place to keep in contact with them, offer pastoral support, and check they are able to access education support.

Regular contact will be maintained with all families whilst their child remains at home. All families have been provided with email and emergency phone contact details, should they require any support whilst school is closed to their child.

Where the DSL has identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, a robust communication plan will be put in place for that child or young person. In addition, each pupil has an individual risk assessment which identifies the risks in relation to continuing to be cared for and educated at home as well as the risks in relation to the Covid 19 virus. Risk assessments will be reviewed and revised in response to any change in circumstances that school becomes aware of either through contact with the family or with other professionals.

A record of contact/attempted contact that has been made with each family must be entered on CPOMS. This may be via remote contact, phone contact, door-step visits (if necessary and agreed with the leadership team). Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded. Staff should only contact parents/carers during normal school hours unless a crisis situation arises.

The DSL or Deputy DSL's should be made aware of any one-to-one calls with pupils, for example pastoral care support. Parent/Carer's phone numbers should be used to communicate with pupils. Where possible staff should use school devices to make calls to families. Where a call is necessary and this facility is not possible, staff should make sure

their number is blocked. If staff members are accessing families' contact details at home, they should ensure they comply with the Data Protection Act 2018.

Any email communication with pupils should be via parents' or carers' email addresses. If a pupil's school email address is used, a copy of all communication should be maintained. In line with the school's Code of Conduct, staff personal email accounts should never be used for communication with parents/carers or pupils.

Pitcheroak School and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any plans for keeping in touch with families.

This plan must be reviewed regularly and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The school will share safeguarding messages on its website and social media pages.

Pitcheroak School recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents/carers. Teachers at Pitcheroak School need to be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Supporting children in school

Pitcheroak School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students and staff.

Pitcheroak 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.

Pitcheroak School 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.

Pitcheroak School 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. This will be bespoke to each child and recorded on CPOMS.

Where school has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – they will discuss them immediately with Denise Hannibal – Education adviser safeguarding.

Where pupil groups are returning to school, we expect school leaders and teachers to:

- consider their mental health and wellbeing and identify any pupil who may need additional support so they are ready to learn
- assess where pupils are in their learning, and agree what adjustments may be needed to the school curriculum over the coming weeks

Food

During the period of national lockdown, school will continue to provide meal options for all pupils who are in school. Meals will be available free of charge to all infant pupils and pupils who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals who are in school.

School will also continue to provide free school meal support to pupils who are eligible for benefits related free school meals and who are not attending school.

Peer on Peer Abuse

Pitcheroak School recognises that during the closure, a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and supporting victims.

Where school receives a report of peer on peer abuse, the principles as set out in part 5 of KCSIE and of those outlined within of the Safeguarding Children Policy will be followed.

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 CPOMS and appropriate referrals made.

Support from the Education Safeguarding Lead

Denise Hannibal – Education Adviser Safeguarding will provide support and guidance as appropriate to enable the DSL to carry out their role effectively.