



Abberley Hall

SCHOOL

COVID-19: ARRANGEMENTS AT ABBERLEY HALL FOR SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION DURING THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK

UPDATED JANUARY 2021

**HEADMASTER & DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD
(DSL) : Mr Jonnie Besley**

DSL: Mr Matt Bennett-Tomlin

DEPUTY DSL and EYFS LEAD: Mrs Emma Green

E-SAFETY CO-ORDINATOR: Mr John Hiles

SAFEGUARDING GOVERNOR: Mrs Sarah Angus

SCHOOL PREVENT LEAD: Mr Matt Bennett-Tomlin

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CONTEXT - RESPONSE TO COVID-19:

There have been significant changes within the school in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. All of our pupils are now at home, teaching is being delivered online as distance learning and many pupils and staff are experiencing periods of self-isolation or quarantine.

The school will remain open only for children of “critical” or “key” workers, essential to the COVID-19 response, whose children cannot be cared for at home.

Discussions relating to this are taking place between the individual parent(s) and Mr Jonnie Besley (Headmaster).

Despite the changes, the school’s Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is fundamentally the same: **children and young people always come first, and staff should respond robustly to safeguarding concerns and contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in line with our established safeguarding procedures. Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.**

This annexe sets out some of the adjustments we are making in line with the changed arrangements in the school and following advice from government and local agencies.

THE CURRENT SCHOOL POSITION AND LOCAL ADVICE:

Abberley Hall is continuing to provide education in term time through virtual/distance learning and the Boarding Houses are not currently open for pupils. We are following safeguarding advice from the Department for Education (DfE), Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), as appropriate.

KEY CONTACTS:

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mr Matt Bennett-Tomlin	matt.bennett-tomlin@abberleyhall.co.uk 01299 896275 / 07960 281653
Deputy DSL	Mrs Emma Green	emma.green@abberleyhall.co.uk
E-Safety Co-ordinator	Mr John Hiles	john.hiles@abberleyhall.co.uk
SENCO	Mrs Catherine Beaumont	c.beaumont@abberleyhall.co.uk
School Nurse	Miss Fiona MacKay	fiona.mackay@abberleyhall.co.uk
School Counsellor	Mrs Susanna Loveridge	c.beaumont@abberleyhall.co.uk
Headmaster	Mr Jonnie Besley	jonnie.besley@abberleyhall.co.uk Office - 01299 896275
Safeguarding Governor	Mrs Sarah Angus	sarah.angus@malverncollege.org.uk
Chairman of Governors	Mr Carey Leonard	carey.leonard@malverncollege.org.uk

REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

The school reporting arrangements continue in line with our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy. If you are concerned about the safety or wellbeing of a child, please contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Deputy DSL immediately.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is: **Mr Matt Bennett-Tomlin** matt.bennett-tomlin@abberleyhall.co.uk, 07960 281653

The Deputy DSL is: **Mrs Emma Green** emma.green@abberleyhall.co.uk

It is important that all Abberley Hall staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy) and the school's approach ensures the DSL or deputy, if not on-site, will always be contactable by phone, email or video link (for example, if working from home through Microsoft Teams). In the unusual circumstance that this is not possible, the Headmaster or another member of the Senior Leadership Team will email all staff to advise they are acting in a safeguarding role and will ensure relevant contact details are circulated.

Staff will continue to follow the Child Protection procedure and advise the safeguarding leads immediately of 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, rather than a reduction in standards.

Children's services may be affected by the impact of the virus on staff and an increased demand for services. If a child is in immediate danger, please call 999. Where a child is at risk of significant harm there may be a need to be persistent in referring concerns to the local authority. The DSL remains the point of contact for Children's Services at Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP), but in the unlikely event that you cannot contact the DSL or deputy DSL, the arrangements for contacting children's services direct are:

Contact Family Front Door by calling 01905 822666. The Family Front Door, Initial Contact and Referral Team is the central point for all safeguarding referrals for children and young people aged 0 to 18 years and living in Worcestershire. If you have a child protection concern outside of normal office hours please contact the out of hours emergency duty team (EDT) telephone 01905 768020

Where the trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, a named member of the onsite Senior Management Team will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site, where necessary. This might include liaising with the offsite DSL (or deputy) and with children's social workers where they require access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments at school. The onsite Senior Management Team consists of Mr Nigel Richardson, Mr Simon Bee and Mr Jonnie Besley. NB the relevant 'on duty' member of staff will liaise with staff every day to ensure they are aware who is on duty. The DSL/DDSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the school, they should report the concern to the Headmaster. If there is a requirement to make a notification to the Headmaster whilst away from school, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the Headmaster. Concerns about the Headmaster should be directed to the Chair of Governors – Mr Carey Leonard

IDENTIFYING VULNERABILITY

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.

The Safeguarding and Pastoral teams at Abberley Hall know which of our children are most vulnerable and/or need support, and will continue to work with and support the child and their family, liaising with social workers and with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, as appropriate, to maintain communication with and to protect these pupils. Where vulnerable pupils have returned home to different countries in response to the COVID-19 situation, the DSL and deputy will endeavour to maintain contact with the child and to engage with overseas child protection and health care agencies if practical or necessary.

Abberley Hall will encourage our vulnerable children and young people to attend school, including remotely, if needed and to facilitate ongoing contact.

ATTENDANCE

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance. However, Abberley Hall teachers will follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend on-line lessons and who is persistently absent. Where there is a concern for welfare absences will be referred to the Safeguarding Team and parents will be contacted where there is a concern for the pupil's welfare. The DSL or Deputy DSL will be the main point of contact in these circumstances.

To support the above, Abberley Hall, when communicating with parents/guardians, will confirm that emergency contact numbers are correct and ask for additional emergency contact information where necessary

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

STAFF RESPONSE TO COVID-19 PRESSURES:

The pressures on children and their families at this time are significant. There will be heightened awareness of family pressures through being contained in a small area, and as a result of financial or health anxiety. The DfE emphasises that the teachers must be aware of negative and distressing life events, and the effect on mental health of pupils and parents/carers. These aspects should be considered in expectations for setting work for children to undertake at home (including recognising the impact of online learning). Staff will be aware of and alert to the mental health of both children and their parents/carers and will inform the DSL of any concerns.

The government publication 'Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools' provides useful information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>

SUPPORTING CHILDREN NOT IN SCHOOL

Abberley Hall is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils/students.

Where the DSL, deputy DSL or Pastoral Team have identified a child to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in school, they will ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child or young person.

Details of this plan and records of contact made will be recorded by Mr Matt Bennett-Tomlin.

The communication plans can include remote contact over Microsoft Teams or email, phone contact or liaison with outside agencies. Other individualised contact methods will be considered and recorded. Where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The school will share safeguarding and pastoral messages via communication from SMT. Abberley Hall recognises that school is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances can leave some children potentially vulnerable.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN SCHOOL

Abberley Hall is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its students and the school will continue to be a safe space for all its pupils.

The Headmaster will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to pupil ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety.

Abberley Hall 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 COVID-19.

Abberley Hall will ensure that, if we care for children of critical/key workers and vulnerable children on site, appropriate support is in place for them. This will be specific to each child and recorded on 3sys, when appropriate.

Where Abberley Has has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), First Aiders or Fire Officer – the situation will be discussed immediately with the Senior Management Team.

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, including those between young people who are not currently attending on site education at the school.

We recognise that during the COVID-19 situation, a revised process may be required for managing any report of such abuse and for supporting victims. If we receive a report of peer on peer abuse, we will follow the principles set out in part five of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE, 2020) and those outlined within our existing Peer on Peer Abuse policy, and the guidance in our Acceptable Use of ICT and E-Safety 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 will be recorded on 3sys, and appropriate referrals made (including, if necessary, to the police).

PUPILS AND ONLINE SAFETY AWAY FROM SCHOOL

Abberley Hall will continue to provide a safe environment, including on-line. It is important that all staff interacting with pupils, including on-line, continue to be vigilant to signs that a child/young person is at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with as per the

Safeguarding and Child protection policy; concerns/referral should be made in the first instance to the DSL/Deputy DSL and, as required, to children's social care and the police.

Abberley Hall teachers have been advised that online teaching should follow the same principles as set out in the school's staff Code of Conduct and have been given additional supporting information. They have been reminded of the importance of maintaining the same professional boundaries and of the importance of using only school systems/equipment to communicate with pupils and their families.

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

Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual lessons, especially where webcams are involved:

- Group Sessions are the preferred approach for teaching online;
- Avoid using the webcam in one-to-one virtual meetings with pupils (eg in tutor meetings);
- Specific guidance (including regarding the use of webcam for essential teaching purposes) has been issued to staff for whom one to one online lessons are essential (eg in the case of individual Learning Enhancement lessons or for peripatetic music teachers);
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing;
- Pupil participation in online lessons should be in an appropriate designated workspace (for example, not in bedrooms unless there is no alternative in which case the pupil should be at a desk and have the door open) and the background should be blurred, if possible;
- Classes may be recorded to facilitate learning and, if any issues arise, the video can be reviewed;
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time;
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including from any family members in the background;
- Staff must only use platforms provided by Abberley Hall or Malvern College to communicate with pupils;
- Staff will keep a record of the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions. If a lesson/tutor period happens outside of these times a separate note should be made of those details by teachers. If there is a safeguarding need to see the young person via webcam this should also be recorded and discussed with the DSL or Deputy DSL as appropriate.

MITIGATING ONLINE RISK

Young people will be using the internet more during this period and the school will be using online approaches to deliver training, teaching and support. 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 children are learning at the school.

- The school continues to ensure [appropriate filters and monitors are in place](#) and will regularly review arrangements to ensure they remain appropriate;
- The school has taken on board guidance from the [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) on safe remote learning and guidance for [safer working practice](#) from the Safer Recruitment Consortium. We have reviewed the code of conduct and information sharing policy accordingly;
- Staff are aware of the risk that professional boundaries could slip during this exceptional period and been reminded of the school's code of conduct and importance of using school systems to communicate with children and their families;

- Children and young people accessing remote learning receive guidance on keeping safe online and know how to raise concerns with the school, [Childline](#), the [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) and [CEOP](#).
- Parents and guardians receive information about keeping children safe online with peers, the school, other education offers they may access and the wider internet community. We have set out the school's approach, including the sites children will be asked to access and set out who from the school (if anyone) their child is going to be interacting with online. Parents have been offered the following links:
 - [Internet matters](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
 - [Net-aware](#) - for support for parents and carers from the NSPCC
 - [Parent info](#) - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
 - [Thinkuknow](#) - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
 - [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - advice for parents and carers

Free additional support for staff in responding to online safety issues can be accessed from the [Professionals Online Safety Helpline at the UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

SAFEGUARDING TRAINING AND INDUCTION

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID 19 virus.

While 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 of KCSiE Education (2020). The DSL will 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 Abberley Hall, 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 Abberley Hall' Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, a copy of the staff Code of Conduct, confirmation of local processes and confirmation of DSL arrangements.

New starters may be asked to complete online courses such as [Keeping Children Safe in Education Knowledge Check](#) and the [Introduction to Safeguarding Children](#) online courses with Safeguarding Network.

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, Abberley Hall will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes for their setting, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of KCSiE 2020.

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 Abberley Hall is utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in KCSiE 2020. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

The school will continue to follow the duty to refer to DBS any adult who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult, and to the Teacher Regulation Agency in line with KCSiE (2020) using the address 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, and that appropriate checks have been carried out, especially for anyone engaging in regulated activity. As such, Abberley Hall keeps the single central record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs in KCSiE 2020.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

All staff and students on-site or working in school will observe the government guidelines on social distancing. Risk assessments and any required actions for the onsite care provided for "key" and "critical" workers will also be implemented.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS/PHONE NUMBERS

Local Authority Children's Social Care Team

Child resident in Worcestershire:	Family Front Door 01905 822666 www.worcestershirechildrenfirst.org.uk
Child resident in Herefordshire	01432 260800
Education Adviser Safeguarding (Worcs.).	01905 844436
Worcs. Designated Officer (LADO)	01905 846221

Police Child Protection Unit	101 (Emergency – 999)
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PREVENT contact	Paul Kinsella 01905 846550 pkinsella@worcestershire.gov.uk
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UPDATED GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19#safeguarding-pupils-and-teachers-online>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19#reporting-concerns>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19#communicating-with-parents-carers-and-pupils>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19#virtual-lessons-and-live-streaming>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19#providing-pastoral-care-remotely>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19#personal-data-and-gdpr>