

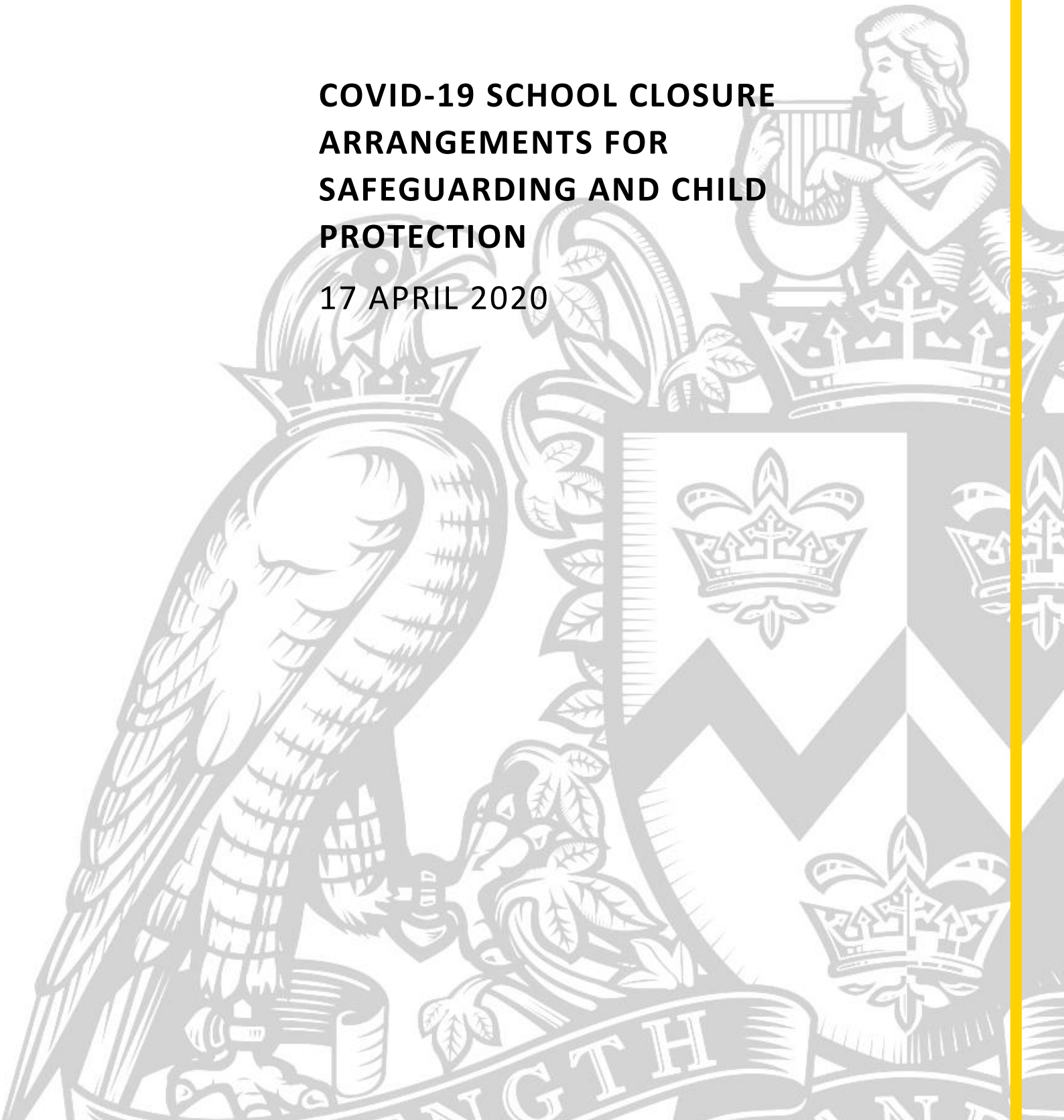


ROYAL  
BALLET  
SCHOOL

SETTING THE STANDARD

**COVID-19 SCHOOL CLOSURE  
ARRANGEMENTS FOR  
SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD  
PROTECTION**

17 APRIL 2020



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## CONTEXT

From 20 March 2020 the government stipulated that parents were to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response - who absolutely need to attend. The Royal Ballet School had already made the decision to close the School a few days earlier for the same reasons.

Schools and all childcare providers were asked to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

This addendum has been written to highlight any context-specific safeguarding arrangements that may arise in the current circumstances. Unless stated here, the usual safeguarding procedures outlined in the School's Safeguarding Policy will continue to apply.

## KEY CONTACTS

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead – Huw Goodwin**

+44 7522 929440

[huw.goodwin@royalballetschool.org.uk](mailto:huw.goodwin@royalballetschool.org.uk)

### **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead – Jill Tail-Harris**

+44 7766 162048

[jill.tait-harris@royalballetschool.org.uk](mailto:jill.tait-harris@royalballetschool.org.uk)

### **Safeguarding Governor – Ms Menna McGregor**

[menna.mcgregor@royalballetschool.org.uk](mailto:menna.mcgregor@royalballetschool.org.uk)

## 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 (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.

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.

Eligibility for free school meals in and of itself should not be the determining factor in assessing vulnerability.

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

The Royal Ballet School will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children if and when this is relevant. This includes working with and supporting children's social workers and the local authority Virtual School Headteacher (VSH) for children looked-after and previously looked-after.

There is an expectation that vulnerable children who have a social worker will attend an education setting, so long as they do not have underlying health conditions that put them at risk. 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 The Royal Ballet School will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent.

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

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

### **ATTENDANCE MONITORING**

Local authorities and education settings do not need to complete their usual day-to-day attendance processes to follow up on non-attendance.

The Royal Ballet School and social workers will agree with parents/carers whether children in need should be attending school – The Royal Ballet School will then follow up on any pupil that they were expecting to attend, who does not. The Royal Ballet School will also follow up with any parent or carer who has arranged care for their child(ren) and the child(ren) subsequently do not attend.

To support the above, The Royal Ballet 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, The Royal Ballet School will notify their social worker.

The Royal Ballet School will complete the Government's daily online attendance form and supply any information regarding attendance requested by Achieving for Children.

### **DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD**

The Royal Ballet School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Mr Huw Goodwin

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Mrs Jill Tait-Harris, Mr David Gajadharsingh, Mrs Julie Dunn, Ms Joanne Millns, Nurse Frances Rees.

The optimal scenario ordinarily for schools is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. This is not currently possible during school closures and so instead DSL (or deputy) will be available to be

contacted via phone or online video - for example when working from home. See the above contact details in the first instance.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, Mrs Jill Tait-Harris and/or Mr David Gajadharsingh (both senior leaders) will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site. This might include updating and managing access to child protection files, 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.

It is important that all School named staff and volunteers have access to a trained DSL (or deputy). On each day staff on site will be made aware of that person is and how to speak to them (this will remain the same as usual School procedures of contacting the DSL or DSL deputies).

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. 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 also continue to follow the same reporting procedures outlined in the School's Safeguarding Policy.

### **SAFEGUARDING TRAINING AND INDUCTION**

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID19 virus.

For the period 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 Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). 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 The Royal Ballet 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 Royal Ballet School's Safeguarding 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, The Royal Ballet School will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes, including relevant sections in part 3 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019).

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 The Royal Ballet School are utilising volunteers, we will continue to follow the checking and risk assessment process as set out in paragraphs 167 to 172 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019). Under no circumstances will a volunteer who has not been checked be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

The Royal Ballet 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 Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019).

The Royal Ballet School will continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) 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](mailto: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, The Royal Ballet School will continue to ensure that all staff, volunteers and essential visitors sign in and out of the premises and will continue to keep the Single Central Record (SCR) up to date as outlined in paragraphs 148 to 156 in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019).

### **ONLINE SAFETY**

The Royal Ballet School will continue to operate within the School policies outlining online safety and appropriate use. If there are any concerns regarding inappropriate or harmful online use involving staff and/or students of the School then people should contact the School's DSL (see above for contact details).

The Royal Ballet School will continue to ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place to protect pupils when they are online on the School's IT systems or recommended resources.

It is important that all staff who interact with children, including online, continue to look out for signs a child may be at risk. Any such concerns should be dealt with in line with the Safeguarding Policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to children's social care and as required, the police.

The Royal Ballet School 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:

- No 1:1s, groups only (unless 1:1 has prior agreement from senior leadership and relevant safeguarding plan put in place in advance)
- 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 the background should be blurred
- Teachers should use a School's online platform (e.g. Microsoft Teams or Zoom) and not their personal accounts
- Academic classes to 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
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background
- Staff should record the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held.

## **SUPPORTING CHILDREN NOT IN SCHOOL**

The Royal Ballet School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils.

Where the DSL has identified a pupil to be on the edge of social care support, or who would normally receive pastoral-type support in School, we will ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that pupil. All contacts with the pupil must be recorded.

The communication plans can include: remote contact; phone contact; door-step visits. Other individualised contact methods should be considered and recorded. The Royal Ballet School and its DSL will work closely with all stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of any communication plan.

This plan must be reviewed regularly (at least once a fortnight) and where concerns arise, the DSL will consider any referrals as appropriate.

The School will share safeguarding messages on its website and any communications to families.

The Royal Ballet 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 The Royal Ballet School will take this into consideration when setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

## **SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN SCHOOL**

The Royal Ballet School is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its pupils. The Royal Ballet 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.

The Royal Ballet 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.

The Royal Ballet 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 pupil.

Where The Royal Ballet School has concerns about the impact of staff absence – such as our Designated Safeguarding Lead or first aiders – we will discuss them immediately with our School Improvement Partner (SIP)/Link Adviser

## **CHILDREN MOVING SCHOOLS**

If any pupils are temporarily attending other schools or transfer to another school, The Royal Ballet School will ensure that they provide the receiving school will all relevant welfare and child protection information.

Any change of school for children looked after will be led and managed by the Virtual School Headteacher with responsibility for the child.

The Royal Ballet School continues to have appropriate regard to data protection and GDPR and are aware that they do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe.

## **MENTAL HEALTH**

The Royal Ballet School is aware that negative experiences and distressing life events such as the current circumstances can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents.

The Royal Ballet School will ensure that appropriate support is in place for the children of critical workers and vulnerable children whilst on site.

The Royal Ballet School will continue to offer support to pupils who are not on site, this will be done remotely via the School's Microsoft Teams account or email. Students can continue to access 1:1 counselling/therapy sessions with the School's Counsellor or Clinical Psychologist using the above teleconferencing platform. These can be arranged by contacting the counsellor and/or psychologist directly ([stef.radu@royalballetschool.org.uk](mailto:stef.radu@royalballetschool.org.uk) at White Lodge or [huw.goodwin@royalballetschool.org.uk](mailto:huw.goodwin@royalballetschool.org.uk), at either White Lodge or Upper School).

The Royal Ballet School will ensure that all pupils have contact details for appropriate support services and these were sent out electronically to students and parents soon after the School closure. One such signposting advice was for students to access Kooth. Kooth is an online counselling and emotional well-being platform for children and young people [www.kooth.com/](http://www.kooth.com/).

## **PEER ON PEER ABUSE**

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



The Royal Ballet School will follow the principles as set out in part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) and our Safeguarding and Child Protection 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 must be recorded using the School's procedure and appropriate referrals made.