



## **Appendix 9: Covid-19 appendix**

*April 2020*

The way Downside School operates in response to coronavirus (COVID-19) is fundamentally different to business as usual, however, a number of important safeguarding principles remain the same:

- with regard to safeguarding, the best interests of children must always continue to come first
- anyone with a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act and act immediately
- a DSL or deputy DSL will be available
- safer recruitment processes apply
- children should continue to be protected when they are online

### **The role of the DSL and DDSLs**

The DSL or DDSL will be available via email or phone during term time and will triage MyConcern and make referrals to SSCP or relevant external agencies where necessary. The DSL will keep a record of the most vulnerable pupils and make arrangements for support.

### **Raising a concern**

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 as per the child protection policy.

### **Mental and emotional wellbeing**

Negative experiences and distressing life events, such as the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of pupils and their parents. Teachers should be aware of this in setting expectations of pupils' work where they are at home.

Mental health issues can bring about changes in a young person's behaviour or emotional state which can be displayed in a range of different ways, and that can be an indication of an underlying problem.

Early intervention to identify issues and provide effective support is crucial. The school role in supporting and promoting mental health and wellbeing can be summarised as:

- Prevention: creating a safe environment for remote learning, and equipping pupils to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively. This will include teaching pupils about mental wellbeing and maintaining, as far as possible, the school community through tutoring, *Lectio divina* and teaching
  - Identification: recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible;
  - Early support: helping pupils to access evidence based early support and interventions;
- and
- Access to specialist support: working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment.

The DSL will liaise with the Head of Nursing Care to provide appropriate support for vulnerable pupils and their parents and/or guardians, where possible. This may be in the form of signposting to relevant agencies, the GP or the Independent Listener.

### **Keeping children safe online**

Pupils have very clear reporting routes in place so they can raise any concerns whilst online. They can report a concern directly to the DSL or the DDSLs, email a member of school staff or contact the Independent Listener. In addition, the school will also signpost children to age appropriate practical support from the likes of:

- [Childline](#) - for support
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - to report and remove harmful online content
- [CEOP](#) - for advice on making a report about online abuse

### **Online teaching and learning**

The starting point for online teaching and learning are the same principles as set out in the school's Staff Code of Conduct. The School will inform parents, staff and pupils of the approved platforms for teaching and learning. Pupils will be informed, in advance, of live meetings, audio or visual, and a record will be kept of attendees. School email accounts will be used for all communications between staff and pupils.

### **Safer Recruitment**

It remains essential that people who are unsuitable are not allowed to enter the children's workforce or gain access to children. If the school recruits new staff, it will continue to follow the relevant safer recruitment processes, including, as appropriate, relevant sections in part 3 of 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.