



COVID-19 arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection

COVID-19 arrangements for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Monkey Puzzle Warwick

Context

From 20th March 2020 parent/carers were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for nurseries and education settings to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response - who absolutely need to attend.

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

This addendum of the Monkey Puzzle Warwick Safeguarding policy contains details of our individual safeguarding arrangements in the following areas:

- Vulnerable Children
- Attendance monitoring
- Designated Safeguarding Lead – continuation of support
- Reporting a concern
- Safeguarding Training and induction
- Safer recruitment/volunteers and movement of staff
- Supporting children in nursery
- Supporting children not in nursery
- Online safety
- Children and online safety away from nursery

Note: This annex is in addition to the current policies outlined below, and must always be referenced to and implemented:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Equality & Diversity
- E-Safety Policy

Key contacts

Role	Name	Contact number	Email
Nursery Owner/Franchisee	Patsy Monahan		Patsy@monkeypuzzlewarwick.co.uk
Nursery Manager/ Person in Charge	Becky Pool	07578247933	Manager.warwick@monkeypuzzlewarwick.co.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Becky Pool	07578247933	Manager.warwick@monkeypuzzlewarwick.co.uk
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Amy Udall Currently Furloughed	N/A	N/A
Local Authority Children's Services referral number	MASH	01926 414144 m-t 8.30-5.30 f 8.30-5	Out of hours – 01926 886922
LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)	LADO Warwickshire	01926 745376	lado@warwickshire.gov.uk
Monkey Puzzle Head Office	Stuart Graham	01442 878887	stuart@mpdn.co.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 parent/carers, to decide whether they need to continue to be offered a nursery 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.

Nursery management and the Designated Safeguarding Lead 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.

Where vulnerable children join our nursery from another setting we will ensure that we secure sufficient information from the child's previous setting by directly communicating with a member of the DSL team. We acknowledge that this may prove difficult given closures and we will contact the local authority for their support and contact the child's social worker where applicable. A record of your actions will be kept as evidence of our efforts to seek essential information to meet the child's needs.

Monkey Puzzle Warwick will continue to work with and support children's social workers to help protect vulnerable children. The lead person for this will be: Becky Pool

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/carer does not want to bring their child to an education setting, and their child is considered vulnerable, the social worker and Monkey Puzzle Warwick will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent/carer.

Where parent/carers are concerned about the risk of the child contracting COVID19, Monkey Puzzle Warwick will support the social worker in talking through these anxieties with the parent/carer following the advice set out by Public Health England.

Attendance monitoring

Attendance monitoring is required, however with the partial closure non-attendance of children does not need to be followed up unless they meet the criteria for vulnerable children above.

In all circumstances where a vulnerable child does not take up their place at nursery, or discontinues, Monkey Puzzle Warwick will notify their social worker.

If a child is expected to attend, and is a no-show on the day, contact must be made with the parent/carer on the same day. Where families with social workers cannot be reached, the social worker must also be notified.

Designated Safeguarding Lead – continuation of support

Monkey Puzzle Warwick has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is: Becky Pool

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Amy Udall – Currently Furloughed

The optimal scenario is to have a trained DSL (or deputy) available on site. Where this is not the case a trained DSL (or deputy) will be available to be contacted via phone or online video - for example when working from home. Head Office will hold a list of active DSLs in the network and will be able to signpost to other nurseries for DSL support where required.

Where a trained DSL (or deputy) is not on site, in addition to the above, the nursery management team will assume responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.

We do however have senior DSL's and have trained Room Leaders too.

This might include updating and managing access to child protection files 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 nursery.

The DSL will continue to engage with social workers, and attend all multi-agency meetings, which can be done remotely.

It is important that all Monkey Puzzle Warwick staff 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.

Reporting a concern

Concerns regarding children and families:

We recognise during this period of time, there may be concerns raised either within the setting, or indeed through contact outside of the nursery/online. Where staff have a concern about a child, they should continue to follow the process outlined in the Safeguarding Policy. All concerns, regardless of origination must follow the process below:

Step 1: When a concern arises speak to the named DSL on site, or if remotely contact via video call/audio call.

Step 2: Complete the logging of concern form, if electronic, ensuring it is password protected.

Step 3: Hand to the DSL on site or, if electronic, e-mail to the DSL on their work e-mail address with 'Private & Confidential' in the subject heading. Please note: Once you have received receipt of the e-mail, please delete the original file from your computer.

Step 4: If your named DSL is not contactable, please escalate to the director Patsy Monahan and MASH (see Key Contacts table above)

Step 5: Should a member of staff have concerns that a child is at risk of significant harm, or their DSL is not contactable, they are able to make a referral themselves (please see contact details above)

Staff are reminded of the need to report any concern immediately and without delay.

Allegations against staff:

Where staff are concerned about an adult working with children in the nursery, they should report the concern to the DSL. This concern should also be documented on a yellow form 'Logging a concern about a staff member' If there is a requirement to make a notification to the DSL whilst away from nursery, this should be done verbally and followed up with an email to the DSL.

Concerns around the nursery management should be directed to Patsy Monahan (Director)

Safeguarding Training and induction

DSL training is very unlikely to take place whilst there remains a threat of the COVID 19 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 nursery staff have had safeguarding training and have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019) and have read and understood the Safeguarding Policy. 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, they will continue to be provided with a safeguarding induction. This will not be applicable whilst the nursery is closed.

If staff are deployed from another education or children's workforce setting to our nursery, 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 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 or volunteers, Monkey Puzzle Warwick will continue to follow the Monkey Puzzle Safer Recruitment Policy and to observe the checklist included in this section below.

During the COVID-19 the recruitment of employed staff the following checklist must be completed and evidenced:

Applications:

The candidates will be asked to complete a Monkey Puzzle Day Nursery application form, providing an explanation for any gaps in their employment history.

Interviews:

Interviews will be undertaken by at least two people, both of whom will have completed Safer Recruitment training. The interviewers will check the candidate's suitability by ensuring they:

- a. Have seen the original qualification certificates and verified the copy
- b. Have verified the qualification is valid and relevant to the role by referencing the DfE approved qualifications list: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eyfs-staffchild-ratios-dfe-approved-qualifications> (Do not download this document as it is regularly updated)
- c. Have checked right to work, copied and validated identity documents
- d. Have seen the original DBS certificate and recorded the relevant details from the certificate
- e. Have confirmed if the candidate is on the update service.
- f. Have probed candidate's values and attitudes to working with children
- g. Checked any gaps/ inconsistencies/ clarifications highlighted on the application form
- h. Have ensured the self-declaration form has been provided and fully completed.

References:

Candidates must provide five years of employment/education references. If this period is not met within their two most recent references, further references must be sought to cover this time period.

- The first reference must be from the candidate's current or most recent employer
- The second reference must be from the next consecutive most recent employer
- If both references are in relation to roles outside of childcare, the candidate's employment history should be reviewed to undertake an appropriate childcare reference outside of the five-year period
- Written/electronic references must be followed up by a telephone call to verify authenticity

References must confirm the position held by the candidate and the dates within which they were employed. To be acceptable, references should also indicate whether the candidate was subject to any disciplinary action and whether there are any known reasons why the candidate should not work with children.

Where it is not practically possible for a reference to be obtained, for example, because the individual's current or last employer has been forced to close temporarily because of the current pandemic situation, the nursery will need to base any recruitment decision on what information they can reasonably obtain about the individual through the wider range of checks.

☑ Pre-appointment checks:

Other pre-employment checks to be undertaken:

- The candidate's health and physical capacity to undertake the role will be verified
- Candidates will be asked to provide evidence for any gaps in employment/education
- Overseas checks must be sought if a candidate has lived outside of the UK for 6 months or more over a 5-year period, or 12 months or more over a 10-year period.

☑ DBS checks:

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 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-changes-to-dbs-id-checking-guidelines>

All candidates are subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check at the relevant level (if in regulated activity a barred list check will also be completed). In relation to the DBS process, the following will be implemented:

1. Update service: If a candidate produces a DBS check on the update service, the previous role listed, and the level of check must be validated as appropriate for the role they are applying for. The details of the DBS check must be recorded, the update service checked, and the date of the check and outcome recorded on the Single Central Record
2. All candidates who are not on the update service will complete a Disclosure and Barring Service check at the appropriate level to the role. If in regulated activity the barred list check will always be completed
3. All new staff are requested to join and pay for the update service if they are not already subscribed. This is an approximate cost of £13 per year and is the responsibility of the employee. This must be completed within 19 days of their DBS application
4. Should an applicant commence their role whilst their Monkey Puzzle DBS check is still in process, the DSL must ensure that the following is in place before the applicant is on site:
 - A DBS risk assessment has been completed
 - A barred list check has been completed and no barred list status is recorded
 - They have had sight of the applicant's DBS check from their most recent employer, which is at the appropriate level and is dated within the last three years.

The original DBS certificate must be seen, and the DBS certificate number, date of issue, date seen and by whom recorded on the Single Central Record.

☑ Information declared on self-disclosure / DBS certificate:

When the original certificate is seen and there is information disclosed within it, the following steps must be taken:

1. An assessment panel must be conducted by two people. One being a member of the interview panel, and the second an appropriate, management level, employee of the nursery
2. The applicant is invited in to attend the assessment panel
3. Using the 'DBS suitability assessment form', which must be handwritten, complete 'Part A' of the form by reviewing the information disclosed on the certificate against the self-disclosure made, and the applicants DBS certificate details
4. Then complete 'Part B and C' with the applicant, which is counter-signed by the candidate
5. Following the assessment, the two panel members must complete 'Part D' to determine suitability of the applicant to proceed with conditional offer.

Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006:

Candidates must be reviewed under the Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006.

If meeting the disqualification threshold, a waiver can be sought, and the applicant is supported in undertaking this process.

Please see further information: www.gov.uk

Monkey Puzzle Warwick will continue to follow the legal duty to refer to the local authority designated officer regarding any allegations made against staff, including anyone who has harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult. (see contact details above) Full details can be found at Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage Section 3 – The safeguarding and welfare requirements.

Supporting children in nursery

Monkey Puzzle Warwick is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children.

Monkey Puzzle Warwick will continue to be a safe space for all children to attend and flourish. The nursery manager will ensure that appropriate staff are on site and staff to child ratio numbers are appropriate, to maximise safety. It has been acknowledged by the Department for Education that the COVID-19 circumstances meet the threshold of 'exceptionally' and therefore the ratios can be changed if necessary - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures/coronavirus-covid-19-early-years-and-childcare-closures>

Monkey Puzzle Warwick 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 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-social-distancing-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-social-distancing-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

Monkey Puzzle Warwick 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.

Monkey Puzzle Warwick will ensure a record, with appropriate evidence, is kept of all adjustments made within the setting to comply with government guidance and health related advice provided.

Supporting children not in nursery

Monkey Puzzle Warwick is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all its children.

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 nursery, they should ensure that a robust communication plan is in place for that child if necessary.

Monkey Puzzle Warwick 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.

Monkey Puzzle Warwick recognises that nursery is a protective factor for children and young people, and the current circumstances, can affect the mental health of children and their parent/carers/carers. Staff at Monkey Puzzle Warwick need to be aware of this in supporting parent/carers and children at home. Guidance is available at - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-aspects-of-coronavirus-covid-19>

Monkey Puzzle Warwick 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.

Online safety

Monkey Puzzle Warwick will continue to provide a safe environment, including online. Where children are using computers in nursery, appropriate supervision will be in place. Please see the E-Safety Policy for full guidance.

Children and online safety away from nursery

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 safeguarding policy and where appropriate referrals should still be made to the Local Authority Children's Services and as required, the police.

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

When considering a platform to be used:

1. Explore terms and conditions, and privacy policies (data collected)
2. Functionality: Does the site have privacy or moderation functions? Does it allow live streaming? Can this be safely recorded, and can microphones/video be disabled?
3. Find out more about the platform using reputable or reliable sources – there is a lot of ‘fake news’ circulating.
4. Be clear on the actions to be taken to reduce risks: strong passwords / restricting access / using privacy settings / using work-based accounts / updating the settings policy if needed.

Below are some things to consider when delivering virtual learning and activities, especially where webcams are involved:

- Staff must only use platforms endorsed by Monkey Puzzle Warwick to communicate with parent/carers
- Staff must record, the length, time, date and attendance of any sessions held
- Ensure at least two staff members are present for the entire call
- Hold groups sessions only. No 1:1 session
- Share links privately with parent/carers using direct methods of communication (email, text message) and do not post links publicly on Facebook, twitter etc
- Discourage parent/carers from using their child's name when logging in to join a call
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household
- Ensure children are supervised during the call, and the call should be held in a shared space in the house (not in their bedroom for example) with the doors open
- Use professional and appropriate language, this extends to any family members in the background
- Ensure the account you are using to create the call contains appropriate professional images only for profile photos etc
- Not divulge or share any of your personal contact details such as phone numbers, email address, or social media account links
- Not record the call and ensure parent/carers understand to do the same
- Not post screenshots of the call online and ensure parent/carers understand not to do the same

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
<i>April 2020</i>	<i>BP and PM</i>	<i>June 2020</i>

